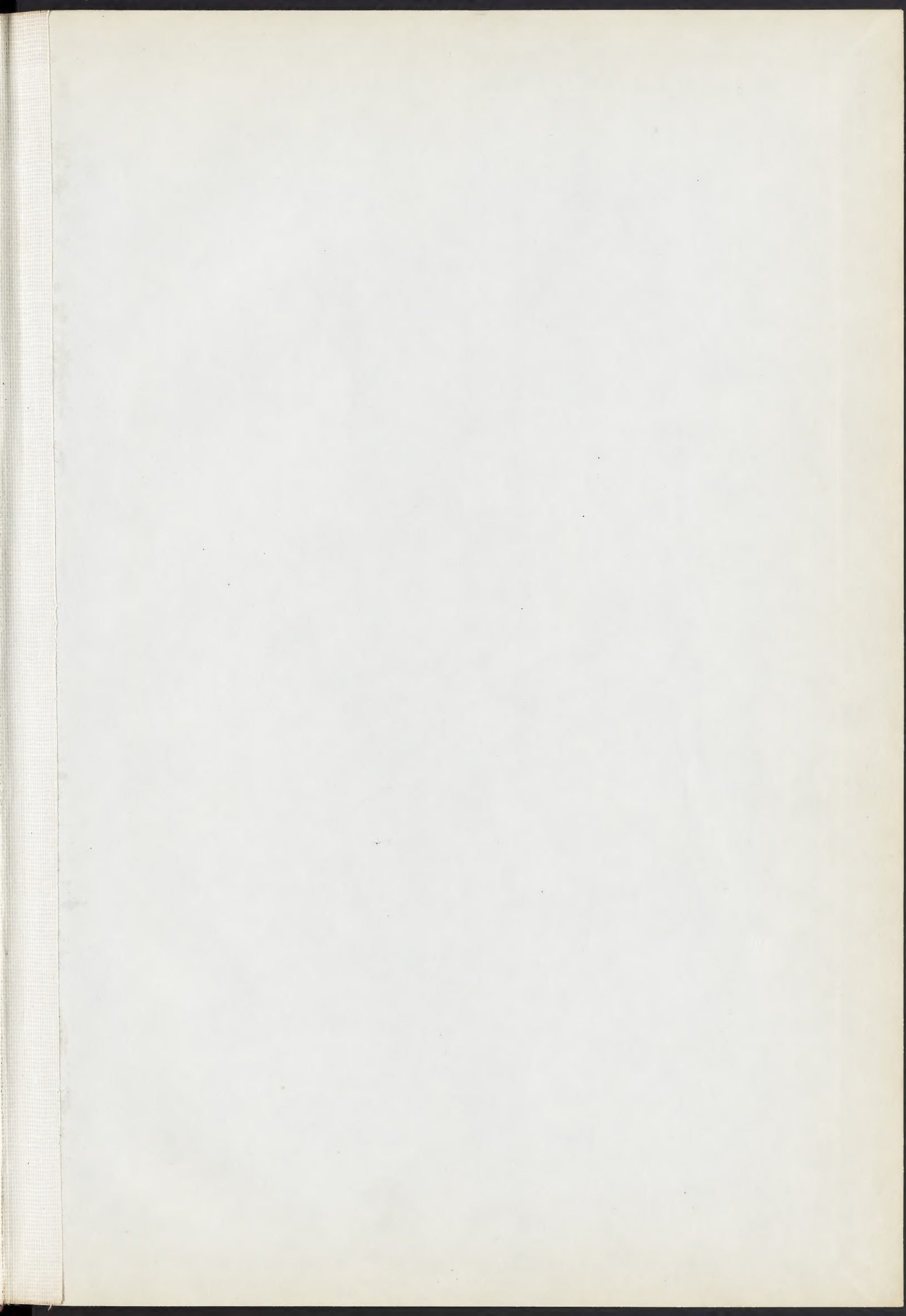


RACE TODAY

1974

DARCUS HOWE



Race Today

JANUARY 1974 TEN PENCE

POWER TO THE
SISTERS
AND THEREFORE
TO THE CLASS

Sex, Race and Working Class
Power

LETTERS

Frontier work

Sir,

Race Today is one of the very few papers I read with a sense that it is honest, intelligent and looking face-forward at the society we live in.

Among half a dozen good pieces in the new number was your challenging 'These Books are Dangerous.' I especially liked your *below-the-belt* comments, but on one I think you are very off target.

To flip-caption Trevor Burgin's *Spring Grove* as 'a liberal experience that failed' is simply *not* to know Huddersfield (where I live) and the work that his team do everyday. If ever I saw the real thing (and forget about having to have a black face as the first qualification for pushing for a decent and many-sided society), then this is it.

Good score — but brush up on target practice, and watch out you don't hit your own urban commandos. We love you, but frontier work is *damned* difficult.

Brian Jackson,
The Childminding Research Unit,
32 Trumpington Street,
Cambridge CB2 1QU

Reply to Brent C.A.R.D.

Sir,

In your current issue you report the C.A.R.D. in Brent asking West Indians to boycott Asian shops because they are treated with disdain and disgust. I have always condemned arrogance, prejudice and rudeness, irrespective of where they are practised. Some Asians come in that category, but it is dangerous for Guy Elliston to make a generalisation.

Do the members of C.A.R.D. know or care to know that a large number of West Indians are also guilty of similar charges? Every week I receive complaints from Asian teachers, doctors and workers of bad manners and threats of violence by West Indians. I have personally witnessed and experienced many incidents like these. But I do not make a general attack. The majority is decent and friendly.

C.A.R.D. should put their own house in order before throwing stones at others.

Dhani Prem,
President, The Standing Conference
of Asian Organisations in U.K.,
9 Longlands Road,
Halesowen, Worcestershire.

(The report appeared in *Area Round-Up*, a non-evaluative account of press cuttings received in the Institute of Race Relations.

However we would like to point out that *Race Today* does not feel that the sort of arguments put forward by Mr. Elliston in the first place, and then by Dr. Prem, contribute anything to the debate on racist oppression and the struggles of both Asian and West Indian communi-

ties against it. Nothing constructive can be gained by the continuation of such a debate.)

Black dialect

Sir,

How about running an article some time about the special (i.e. racist) treatment of Black interviewees by journalists? Not in respect of the questions asked (a subject in its own right), but of the way in which their answers are recorded.

No one denies that different Black groups have different speech-idioms which are distinctive and identifiable in varying degrees. (In this they resemble all mankind.) What is at issue is something else.

Normally, when interviews are recorded in written-down form, standard English is used as a matter of course — not a semi-phonetic rendering of the spoken sounds. No-one would expect the dropped aitches of Cockney speech to remain dropped in print, except, perhaps, to flavour the odd witticism.

With Black speakers, both American and West Indian, the standard treatment is different, however. *Their* words are frequently rendered phonetically (e.g. the final 'g' of a word ending in 'ing' is omitted). Unlike the Scot, the Cockney and the Liverpudlian, the Black speaker is not allowed to have his words recorded as he would have written them himself (if he had been doing the writing). The result is something calculated to appear more like a form of pidgin English than a dialect among dialects — as if to question the fact that English is as much the native language of Black Americans and West Indians as of the White British and Americans. (Remember that when a Frenchman's 'the' is written 'ze', the writer's aim is to represent a comical mispronunciation by a non-native speaker.) Worse: words of Black speakers can be mis-spelt even when the altered spelling does not correspond

to any peculiarities of pronunciation, so as to convey a desired image. In Gordon Burn's report on Madeline Bell on p. 3 of the *Radio Times* for 24-30 November 'no nothing' is written 'no nuthin'. I have mentioned the missing 'g', but where does the 'u' come from?

I can guess how *Radio Times* would defend themselves. They would plead that they were trying to make the interview 'come alive', to convey the immediacy of Miss Bell. Well, if they wish to pay her this compliment, why discriminate against Geordies, Scousers, Brummies and the rest of us? I am waiting to see 'fair' written 'fur', as they speak it here.

Mike Talbot,
1 Hartford Close
Oxton, Birkenhead,
Ches. L43 2LT

Ugandan Asian housing in Bradford

Sir,

I am replying to the article 'No Room in This City,' *Race Today* (October/November 1973).

This report appears to have been based upon items which have appeared from time to time in the local press. It does not, therefore, relate to the situation as it really is.

Four applications have been made by Uganda Asian families to the City Council of Bradford for houses. Four houses have been allocated to these families, and are now occupied by them.

I do think that it is important for Reporters to consult those in touch with a situation, and not rely on what gets published.

Revd. P.M. Hawkins,
Chairman, Bradford and District
Co-ordinating Committee for the
Welfare of Evacuees from Uganda

(letters continued on p. 35.)



EDITORIAL

From Victim to Protagonist — The Changing Social Reality

Up to the late 1960s, the race question in Britain had been dominated by a liberal mystification of who and what black people are and consequently what they can and cannot do. The portrayal of the black population as 'helpless victims' has been the central thesis of this tendency, finding concrete expression in the various statutory and non-statutory bodies which comprise the Race Relations Industry — the Race Relations Board, the Community Relations Commission, the Runnymede Trust and the 'old' Institute of Race Relations.

In opposition to this tendency, a small but articulate body of black activists posed the revolutionary potential of Caribbean and Asian peoples. The release of the creative power and popular energy from within the ranks tore apart the illusions of liberalism manifested in the 'victim theory' and gave concrete expression to the self-activity of the masses of black people as the motive force in the fight against racism. That they are victims — yes — but only to the extent that they are in the process of becoming protagonists. Witness, for instance, the battles waged in the communities on the police question, on education, on housing, on the shop floor (Asian workers mainly in the Midlands, Caribbean workers in the South of England).

To persist in 'the victim theory' in the face of all this is not merely to distort the social reality of the black population. It reveals the institutions of liberalism as prime agents of social control standing on the necks of the emerging forces in the black community. In the recent strike of Asian workers in the textile industry (Mansfield Hosiery), the local community relations officer enjoined the racist trade union leadership to mediate between the workers and management. Where before the Race Relations industry confined itself to mediating within communities, today they are moving to find a new lease of life in the mediating machinery within industry and therefore present an image of management with a liberal face. White workers would rightly resent these harbingers of welfare meddling in matters that do not concern them, with the consequence of exacerbating the already tense racial divisions on the shop floor.

However, within the liberal institutions themselves, the presence of black workers on the political stage, created a serious crisis. The Institute of Race Relations was particularly affected. The organisation broke at its seams, the liberals were dethroned as the progressives sought to respond to new developments within the black community itself. This process gave birth to the 'new' *Race Today* and its publishers, Towards Racial Justice.

Our editorial policy, therefore, has been formed and shaped out of the conflict between liberal mediation, of whatever colour, and the newly-emerging social forces of black revolt. Our task is to record and recognise the struggles of the emerging forces as manifestations of the revolutionary potential of the black population. We recognise too the release of intellectual energy from within the black community, which always comes to the fore when the masses of the oppressed by their actions create a new social reality. *Race Today* opens its pages to the tendency which seeks to give theoretical clarification to independent grass roots self-activity with a view to furthering its development.

Darcus Howe

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BETWEEN THE LINES

'Even tho' he was a Pak': Another TU conference

On 17 November, the Midland Regional Conference to Combat Racial Discrimination was held. The Conference was sponsored by Trade Unionists and the participants were shop stewards and other activists from factories in the Midland region.

The morning session consisted of contributions from the floor: all contributions took as given that it was in management's interests to divide and rule workers on racial grounds. However, when it came to discussing racialism and how to combat it the contributions varied. For some, racial discrimination was no different from other forms of discrimination; before it was the Irish and the Jews, now it was coloured people. For others, divisions on the floor in terms of colour or sex did not exist. Most spoke in terms of helping our 'coloured brothers', of racial discrimination and prejudice handicapping black workers who were 'super exploited' and of 'young black people who were not being given job opportunities'. The notable exception was a representative from the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions, who spoke of the harassment of the Asian community and the danger that if Asians were being asked for identification cards today, it would be white workers tomorrow. The paternalism of most of the contributions is summed up in the following words of a Transport and General Workers Union (Cadbury) representative: 'A coloured lad had lost his wages . . . the workers had a collection for him and even though he was a PAK . . . he got the same amount as a white man.'

However, this paternalism changed after the contributions of the black participants, who, in questioning the terms of the debate, raised larger issues. A representative from the Afro-Cuban Society questioned the bureaucracy of the trade union which worked against the workers' interests — that shop stewards did not always act in the interests of workers but of management, and at times, it seemed, that management controlled them.

A representative from National Committee for Trade Unions Against Racism said that so far no one had acknowledged that black workers were themselves organising and fighting back — with or without unions. Imperialism had not been mentioned — yet a discussion on racism could only be discussed in this context. Another black participant said he found it strange that no one had mentioned the black struggles that had been going on, especially the struggle which had been waged for the past 25 years against the police. It was not the case as the conference had so far tried to

make out — of what could be done for black people, but what black people could and were doing for them and for the class as a whole.

The responses to the issues raised by the black participants were either hostility in defence of the existing trade union structure and white workers racism, or criticism of the trade unions. A representative of the Birmingham Trades Council comments: 'Some of the remarks have been near the bone . . . near to black racialism . . . you can have your little organisations, you can have your little social groups but don't think there is any substitute for trade union organisation.'

Two representatives from the same branch of TGWU publicly disagreed with each other. One, in defending workers' racism, hinted that a solution could be to 'send them back', whilst the other, in attacking him, said: 'When it's a dispute amongst the men they send us in. When it's a big meeting they send in the generals with the briefcases. When they came back from negotiating a pay deal and the workers questioned what they were getting they were told by the officials, "what are you complaining about, you're getting more than the blacks".'

Another, in calling for more honesty, said: 'let's face it, half our members are not even interested in the trade union they just pay their subs... we can't get them to participate in anything'.

The summing up was done by Bob Wright of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, one of the sponsors of the Conference. After giving a short historical analysis of the growth of racism he urged 'coloured' people to participate in every level of trade union activities. The trade union, for its part, must involve more 'coloured' people. There was a danger that 'coloured' people would become anti-white and they must integrate more into the society. But above all, he stressed, 'black self-organisation was a danger . . . if coloured people organise separately into sectarian groups or separate trade unions they are making a tragic mistake . . . the answer is not separate organisation . . . we must come together and create a unified union.'

It was clear that the message to the delegates embodied in Bob Wright's summing up was that racialism on the shop floor, and the union's failure to combat it, was leading to separate black self-organisation — and that black self-organisation was the danger.

But why is it a danger, if black organisation means fighting capitalism on the shop floor as well as the community? Can one assume that the real danger is to the existing Trade Union Movement?



Christopher Davies (Report)

Pickets outside the *Newham Recorder* protesting that paper's racist handling of the crisis in the borough's schools. In the leading article for 25 October, the paper headlined the story 'Outcast — by Asian Influx', and then went on to explain how Alderman Arthur Edwards, Chairman of the Newham Education Committee, blamed the Ugandan Asian immigrants for the state of the local schools. The position has not changed much since long before the Asians came. There has always been shortage and crowding as the borough's children don't have the same sort of priority in Mrs. Thatcher's scheme of things as the public schools and direct grant schools. The borough has — and has always had — the lowest percentage of children going to University of any in the country. Yet the paper echoes the ridiculous theory that somehow the Asians caused the crisis.

Black Calendar

'In 1970 the Queen of England made her a Dame of the British Empire!' She was also 'the first female governor of the West Indies!' She is Hilda Gibbs-Bynoe. A new calendar issued this month by Focus Publisher Bob Sye, purports to be the 'untold history of the Black Man in the Caribbean, Africa and America!' This in itself is misleading as, apart from the months of January (Marcus Garvey), February (Stokely Carmichael) and December (Franz Fanon), the makers of our 'untold history' are merely examples of black men who have made it in a white world such as E.W. Barrow, Aubrey Williams and Colville Aubrey Baynes.

But there are some good points. If you ignore the 'historian' of the month and get down to the days of the month you can glean the type of chronological data that is important in the making of real black history and the real giants of the black movement. One learns for instance that Du Bois was born on 23 February 1868, or Angela Davis on 26 June 1944. Of merit also are the thumbnail geographical notes on the Caribbean.

[£1.50]

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY
 DETAILS OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONY OF MARRIAGE
 (To be completed by husband and wife jointly)

	Wife
1. What was your age at marriage?	
2. Who arranged your marriage?	
3. Did you agree to the marriage?	
4. (a) Were you present at the religious ceremony?	
(b) If "NO", who represented you?	
5. Where did the religious ceremony take place? (Mosque, temple, house, etc and address)	
6. Please say what happened at the religious ceremony (eg priest reading prayers, walking around the sacred fire, etc)	
7. (a) Did you exchange gifts at the religious ceremony?	
(b) If so, what were they?	
(c) Was there a dowry or bride-price?	

While the Civil and Public Services Association blows hot and cold over the use of their members to check the passports of claimants they suspect of being 'illegal immigrants'. Department of Employment counter clerks have started doing the same thing in some London boroughs. Meanwhile, the DHSS is asking women applicants who don't have 'statutory evidence' of marriage to fill in the above form: they claim it has been checked out by the Race Relations Board and would apply equally to new immigrants from an EEC country. Readers may savour the piquancy of a DHSS counter clerk asking a French or German woman about 'walking around the sacred fire', or the nature of her 'dowry or bride price'.

Education For What

The debates and demands which have been voiced by parents, children and teachers about the large number of black children in ESN schools have reached proportions that even the DES cannot ignore. So on 1 November a circular was sent to chief education officers on 'Educational arrangements for immigrant children who may need special education'. On assessment, it recognises the absence of 'culture-fair' tests and says that 'so far no tests have been devised which can be relied on as the sole instrument for assessing children', yet maintains that 'some of them can provide useful information' and still advocates the use of tests. On getting ESN children back into ordinary schools, it admits that the number transferred is very small, yet accepts that some local education authorities admit immigrant children 'whose difficulties do not appear to stem from lack of ability' into ESN schools as 'the best way of meeting their needs' — only adding that this should not be looked upon 'as more than a temporary expedient'.

So, in its own terms, the circular is vague, if not overtly contradictory. But

this is not important. It is the thinking behind the circular which must be examined. This is expressed, for example, in the statement: 'LEAs' . . . should make plans to provide . . . facilities to overcome linguistic and adjustment problems of immigrant children.' The whole emphasis is on 'immigrants' and their adjustment to the education system. There is no questioning of that system, of the education that black children have forced on them, be it in ESN or in ordinary schools.

The CRC has welcomed the circular, with the proviso that it should lead to results — results in terms of getting black children out of ESN schools. But what about the schools they are put back into? The circular states: 'The best approach to the educational assessment not only of immigrants but of all children is the systematic observation of their results over a period of time in an *educational environment that provides a stimulating learning experience*' (our italics). But it is precisely this educational environment that has put so many black children in ESN schools to begin with — an environment that is not there to stimulate but to prepare children for their future role in the labour force. Any ESN campaign that does not look at the whole of education runs the risk of emptying the ESN schools of all black children, only to find them filling the remedial streams of ordinary schools.

An important part of the process by which children are separated and classified in the education system is by that system's use of testing and the associated paraphernalia of educational psychology that surrounds it. To a large degree, the nonsense of Jensen, Eysenck and associated psychologists is accepted by teachers and education authorities because of the mystification that surrounds any pseudoscience. And the backing of such eminence legitimates the application of prejudice.

This mystification obscures the real purpose of testing, to separate at an early stage the future inhabitants of the labour market, and to prepare those inhabitants for their place in it. This has always been the function of educational psychology since its inception in the nineteenth century around Sir Francis Galton, through the pioneering work of

Cyril Burt at the London County Council to the present stage of reliance on the psychological test as the main tool of assessment for the ESN school.

As part of the response to that, a small group of academics and political scientists centred around Professor Steven Rose at the Open University have started to work on exposing the 'neutrality' claimed by scientists, and to instead pose questions about the use of testing as well as its validity. The result of these discussions is to be drawn up into a booklet for distribution to parents, teachers and trade unionists as a popular demystification of IQ testing: there are also plans to call a series of public meetings to inform the public of what is being done to children in the name of scientific objectivity.

Further information is available from the Campaign on Race, Education and IQ, at 108 Regents Park Road, London NW1.

David & Goliath 1973

In 1972 *Harper and Queen Magazine* wrote: 'The property boom is levelling off . . . Ignore Islington where an outbreak of class war is brewing.' *David and Goliath 1973* (a report for the Holloway Neighbourhood Law Centre and the Barnsbury Forum) is the history of this class war in a small section of Islington. The war was waged between the tenants of Stonefield Street against Redsprings-Chalk and Gwynn-Jones, property speculators, in company with Prebble and Co. The pamphlet documents the successful struggle of the tenants who forced the Council to compulsorily purchase the houses in the area. The key to the struggle was, in the words of the Chairman of the Tenants Association: 'They certainly picked on the wrong street. You see, they didn't reckon with a little community all its own. . . . When the old costermonger died at no 20, the whole football team walked beside the coffin.' Though the pamphlet gives good insights into the inscape of property speculation, it does not explore the Council's own interest in such a struggle. However, meetings held recently between tenants and the Council have made the organisers optimistic that the tenants will continue to use their power in determining where and how they live.

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Institute of Race Relations, 247/249 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 01-837 0041.

Trapped in SA

32-year-old Stanley Winer is a white South African freelance photographer who has taken occasional pictures in the past for this magazine. Normally he lives in London with his 'Coloured' wife: they are unable to live together in South Africa where they have already been prosecuted under the Immorality Act. The Winers left South Africa in 1968, spent two years in Malawi where they were married, and arrived in London in 1970.

After spending some time working for an industrial photographer, Stan went freelance and planned a trip to South Africa to gather material for a book. In April he left Britain, having been commissioned by Dennis Robertshaw from *The Times* to take photographs for two special supplements.

Stan's mother, who lives in Bocksburg, South Africa, was not aware that Stan's wife Astrid is 'Coloured'. A week after Stan had left, Astrid received a phone call from a woman who works for the South African security police in London: this woman said that the police had informed Stan's mother about his marriage, and that he was involved in 'drugs and politics' in London. In June, Astrid received a letter from Stan to say that he had had a dreadful row with his mother over the security police's letter and its contents.

The photographs for *The Times*, meanwhile, had been duly taken and published: one in a supplement on Malawi and another in a supplement on Johannesburg. A few days later, on 26 July Stan was arrested in Kwazulu, a 'non-white' area on a charge of possessing marijuana. His mother later wrote to England that she had herself cleaned out the cupboard where the dagga was supposedly hidden and she knew there was nothing there: she added that the security police had told her they had planted it, and that it was 'only political'. After a series of interrogations during which Stan attempted suicide while in solitary confinement, he was put on bail of R500. Stan immediately fled to Swaziland and asked for asylum. Despite the obviously political use of the 'dagga' charge, the Swazi Government handed him back.

South Africa has a peculiarly draconian attitude to dagga: they burn 35 tons of it every week in an attempt to stamp out its viability as an alternate source of earnings for the black population, and for the potentially subversive affect of its distributive channels. The normal treatment for drugs offenders is a heavy term of imprisonment: despite this, Stan got six months suspended on the drugs charge, and a further three months suspended on a charge of fleeing the country. But as he left the court, the police took his passport from him.

So Stan, who has a particular political and social commitment, is now effectively confined to South Africa on a trumped-up drugs charge. His wife cannot join him because of her colour and is now

being harassed in London by BOSS agents. She has reason to believe her phone is tapped; South African security police have followed her in the street: and her flat was broken into and searched while she was out. Two Labour MPs have taken up the case. Peter Niesewand has written about the harassment in *The Guardian*, and a small demonstration was held outside the South African embassy (after which Astrid received a most unpleasant anonymous letter at her home).

And where has *The Times* been while all this has been going on? What mighty rumblings have come forth from Printing House Square that a photographer working on assignment from them is subsequently arrested and confined to South Africa? Not a peep, not a mention of it has appeared in their columns — to mention Stan's arrest, to follow up on the Niesewand story, or even to report the demonstration as a news event. Indeed when Mrs. Winer phoned to find out what had happened to Stan, *The Times* sent a man round to the South African Embassy to enquire.

When we phoned Dennis Robertshaw at the special supplements department in *The Times*, he confirmed that Stan had indeed been commissioned by him, and that his pictures had appeared in the supplements. He went on to say that he thought that Stan 'had been arrested where all the natives were supposed to go and that he had drugs with him'. He mentioned that although he was anxious on Stan's behalf, as his commission was finished, he could see no further point in carrying on the conversation.

The editor of *The Times* has written in reply to National Union of Journalists General Secretary Ken Morgan to suggest a meeting about Stan. But in the meantime, four months after his arrest, Stan is stuck in an intolerable situation, his wife is under extreme mental pressure and *The Times* rolls quietly along, content to let Stan rot without mentioning his case once in their own columns.

Tenants v Council

On 19 November families living at Edward Henry House and Ferndale Court demonstrated at Lambeth Town Hall in protest at the terrible housing conditions and to demand action from the Council. Edward

Henry House and Ferndale Court are 'half-way houses' and when the tenants were moved in, they believed it was a temporary measure. Some have now been there for over five years. In their petition the tenants of Ferndale state: 'We are living in conditions unsuitable for our children and ourselves. The flats are damp and overcrowded. On several occasions we have all individually been to the Council to complain about the appalling conditions under which we are forced to live. Every time we have been put off with excuses and empty promises.' Some of these appalling conditions include extreme dampness, no heating in the children's bedrooms as the Council has removed all gas fires (a doctor's report confirms that illness in some families was a direct result of this), exposed gas mains, no fire escapes, inadequate drainage, lavatories on open balconies.

The Housing Committee had two meetings on 19 November. At the first meeting, parents and children protested outside and inside the meeting with placards showing large photos of the conditions inside the flats, and shouting slogans as 'Ferndale is a slum' and 'We want decent housing'. Police were called to remove the children from inside the Council room. When some of the tenants had said that it was winter and there was not heating in the children's rooms, one of the Councillors asked why they could not move the children's beds into the front room where there is an electrical point.

Parents and children returned at 7 pm. this time the police were waiting and the demonstration was confined to the steps outside the Town Hall, while some of the tenants went in to put forward their case. At this meeting it was said that the Council was going to pay £21,000 to have an electrical point installed in the children's bedrooms in every flat. A speech was given by a Councillor as to the housing difficulties facing Lambeth Council. He also said that if they were to rehouse the tenants of Edward Henry and Ferndale, others would suffer. But, as one tenant asked: 'Who will pay for the electricity bill and buy the electric heaters?'

Lambeth Council has offered to rehouse two families per month from Edward Henry House and Ferndale Court. However, the accommodation so far offered is as bad as where they are already living.



Cash Crisis at IP

The only employment agency in Britain to cater mainly for black job seekers is International Personnel which has just produced its third annual report. It describes, 'A year of disappointment and conflict. But also a year when in spite of the odds, the Agency achieved the earnings targets which it had set itself'. And that is the story of International Personnel, where its staff continue to work and initiate projects without any official co-operation, without compromising their principles to the demands of financial backers, all in a climate of continued racism from employers.

The services of the first detached employment worker had to be dropped after a successful trial because no support was forthcoming from the D.E. and the C.R.C. Liverpool branch of I.P. had to close because the Management Committee's perception of the scheme would not be compromised to that of John Moore's. But despite these apparent setbacks and its critical financial position, the Balham branch has run a successful training scheme

for one term. The number of applicants registering for employment has dropped but the proportion placed in employment increased to 24 per cent at Balham and achieved 19 per cent at the new Shepherd's Bush branch.

I.P. received only 918 vacancies from employers (one-third of which came from Camden Borough Council), but at present, without more finance, I.P. cannot compete publicity-wise with other employment agencies to boost its number of vacancies and applicants. Neither can it promote its more 'grassroots' work which it stresses as so important; for example 'a team of trained young black detached workers' who 'with the right sort of down-to-earth background could do more than anything else to alleviate hardcore unemployment amongst young blacks'.

Manchester Survey

Evidence from the National Council for Educational Research to the Select Committee tells us that only one teacher in six teaching in a multi-racial school actually has any training to do so. What

that actually means at the grass roots is well illustrated by a local survey recently published by Manchester Council for Community Relations. After surveying all the colleges in a city which is bursting to call itself the largest educational city in Europe, they come to the following unnerving conclusions . . .

That very few colleges offering courses about teaching in multi-racial schools made sure their students did their teaching practice in such a school. Conversely, many colleges sending students on teaching practice in multi-racial schools made little attempt to make sure their students were prepared for their teaching.

That in some colleges, the course still handles the education of black children as though they are suffering from some sort of natural handicap and are thus to be treated as an educational problem.

That in too many colleges, work of this nature is still confined to the odd lecture or two.

Finally, and perhaps most alarmingly, the report notes that many students are getting no preparation at all for teaching in multi-racial schools.

Small Axe

Late risers may have missed the Kenny and Cash show on Capital Radio on Saturday 24 November. If so, they missed this extraordinary piece of dialogue . . .

Kenny Everett (At the end of an upbeat record): 'Very active for this time of the morning isn't he?'

Dave Cash: 'Well, you know they've got it, these coloured chappies.'

Andrew Faulds, the campaigning Labour MP who takes the 'race question' very seriously, has another and less well-publicised side. He is an avid collector of those Victorian relics of Imperialism that used to be known as 'Laughing Nigger' money boxes. They work on the simple principle of the owner placing a penny in the model's outstretched hand, and then flicking the coin into the laughing, open mouth. These models, like so much Victoriana, have rocketed in value out of all proportion during the present inflationary period. Mr. Faulds is now offering up to £20 for specimens in good condition. He can be contacted at his Smethwick constituency.

Who Let the Cat Out?

'Hearing giggling from within our kitchen, I tentatively poked my head round the door to find my wife, who has a dubious sense of humour like myself, chuckling quietly whilst feeding the automatic washing machine. When asked what was the cause of this mirth, she pointed to the wash control programme, which declared that:

B5 Were "Fast Coloureds".

B8 Were "Non-Fast Coloureds".

A6 Were "Delicate" and yes, wait for it,

A10 Were "Special Treatments".

I wonder who told Messrs Hoover?
PC 457 TD Hylands TDH
— letter in *The Job*, 2 November 1973

There is one small bright spot in these gloomy days of Phase 3 and States of Emergency. Investors in Consolidated Gold Fields will be relieved to learn that profits virtually doubled in the year 1973. Group net profit in 1972 was a mere £10 million, while the declared figure for 1973 stands at a ringing £19 million. Consolidated Gold Fields, who have over £200 million invested in South Africa, look forward to an even better year in 1974.

During the National Association of Conservative Graduates conference on the Race Relations Act, the question of the disproportionate number of black children in the ESN schools was inevitably raised. During one of the discussion periods, John Fairweather, an ex-Labour party man who has now turned up as a Monday Club stalwart, put forward vehemently the view that black children would stay out of the ESN schools if only they would work harder. Some of the audience were a little alarmed at the vociferous 'Hear Hears' that regularly punctuated Fairweather's speech. They came from David Lane, Under Secretary of State at the Home Office with special responsibility of immigrant matters.

A Marginal Note on Cultural Imperialism . . . Since 1971, Steel Band music has been regularly featured on the curriculum of some Croydon Schools. Indeed, so popular has the music become that Steel Band Promotions (a voluntary body concerned with increasing interest and support for the music), has now reached an agreement with a light engineering firm in Croydon. In future, instead of being produced by loving, careful labour applied to oil drums, the instruments will

roll off the factory production line. Plans are now being advanced to export the instruments from Croydon to Trinidad, where it is hoped they will prove a good steady seller.

For some time now, Scotland Yard have been using a descriptive index system for classifying both the victims of crime, and 'suspected and apprehended offenders'. The code provides broad ethnological classifications (as they are quaintly called) and Scotland Yard claim that it is only used for internal purposes by the police. It is being used by constables on the beat to identify people from a basic physiognomic outline description, and in common with technological progress, the whole system has been computerised: the police say that it will not be used as a basis for criminal statistics.

Following the conviction of members of the Scotland Yard Drugs Squad on charges of perjury, Release issued the following statement:

One of those convicted today (14 November 1973), Detective Sergeant George Pritchard, was arresting officer in the first criminal case Release dealt with, in July 1967. For over six years we have followed the careers of Mr. Pritchard, Mr. Pilcher, and their colleagues, and on a number of occasions we have provided both their superiors at Scotland Yard and the press with information relating to charges of perjury and corruption. It is quite clear to us that these officers were not, as the jury seem to have thought, committing merely technical offences out of an excess of zeal in one case. Only the tip of the iceberg has been exposed.

It is noteworthy that a team of officers from Lancashire Police who investigated allegations against these same men in 1971 are now themselves being investigated.

DOCK BRIEF

In *Race Today*, July 1973, we reported the trial of four black young people — Linton Johnson, Donna Hart, Jewel Prince and Erroll Tucker — whose charges arose from alleged assaults and a theft in Brixton Market in January 1973. The case against Tucker and Prince was dismissed in a magistrates' court. Johnson and Hart, who elected to be tried by jury, were found not guilty.

The following case also involves Donna Hart who is 18-years-old, mother of one child and six months pregnant. Like her co-defendant, Juliet Hutchinson, she has previous convictions and was on probation.

The case of Hutchinson and Hart was tried before an all-white male jury at Croydon Crown Court.

The prosecution stated that on 19 July 1973, a large crowd was waiting for the 2B bus at the bus stop not far from Brixton tube station. When the bus came, Lloyd Graham (a friend of Juliet Hutchinson) pushed a white woman who was about to board the bus. The woman called a nearby policeman and scuffles broke out as he tried to take Lloyd Graham away. The police officer claims he was assaulted by Graham and Hutchinson. He radioed

for assistance; Lloyd and Hutchinson were arrested and later charged with assaulting the police officer and the woman at the bus stop. Some hours later the police went to the home of Donna Hart alleging that she had been identified as also being present when the incident took place and had assaulted a police officer. In her defence Juliet Hutchinson denied that any assault had been made on the woman. It was said that the crowd that waited for the 2B bus was not an orderly queue, and that when the bus came, people scrambled for the bus. She denied assaulting the police officer, claiming that she had gone to the aid of Graham, who was an epileptic, when he was being held by the officer. Donna Hart denied ever being present at the incident. Both were found guilty and on 25 October Judge Jean Graham Hall sentenced Donna Hart to eighteen months imprisonment and Juliet Hutchinson to a term of borstal training.

* * * *

From Mike Steele:

As reported in *Race Today* (March and July, 1973), Mr. Johns, a West Indian

mechanic living in Brockley, South London, was beaten up when he drove into the back of Police Constable Robin Teal's car.

PC James Donnelly, stationed at Brockley, who was called to the scene merely asked the two men to exchange addresses. He took no steps to charge his off-duty colleague, despite the fact that the black man was badly shaken and bleeding about the face.

In January, PC Teal was fined £20 with £20 costs as a result of a private prosecution taken out by Mr. Johns after he had gone to the Ladywell Action Centre for help. Disciplinary hearings against both officers were held at Catford Police Station in June. There was an appeal against the findings.

Now, Jim McGoldrick, who complained formally, both as Mr. Johns' solicitor and as Chairman of the local NCCL group, has been told by Scotland Yard that:

Careful inquiries were made into the matter raised and disciplinary proceedings were instituted against the officers concerned, who were found 'Guilty'.

The Commissioner very much regrets that their conduct gave your client cause for complaint and I am to assure you that appropriate action has been taken.

Sickle Cell Anaemia Action Urged

Jeff Crawford

Once again Britain might be repeating the American mistake. As Dr. Gerry Dawson pointed out in 'Sickle Cell Anaemia — The Black Killer,' *Race Today*, September 1973, the illnesses of the oppressed simply do not gain the same attention as the 'diseases of civilisation'. Although the medical profession first noted the disease in Chicago in 1910, no serious attention was given to finding a cure until the last three years when the Nixon administration began to channel large sums of money into research.

This increased attention is mainly due to the pressures exerted by black communities throughout the United States. They allege that this disease — one of the current major health problems around the world — has been neglected because the victims are black. They make comparisons with lesser diseases — in terms of size and consequences — which have received far greater attention in the quest for treatment and cure. A well-known American scientific publication stated that: 'The exclusiveness of sickle cell anaemia to black persons has been the largest single hindrance to research, diagnosis and therapy.'

In Britain about 60,000 blacks are affected by the trait — the non-fatal type — which they inherited from one parent. The trait is usually symptomless except when exposed to heavy stress or strain,

for example, marches, strenuous exercises, mountaineering, travelling in non-pressurised aircraft and anaesthesia before surgery. About 1,200 may have the disease known as sickle cell anaemia which is inherited from both parents. Victims of the disease are prone to infection, slow healing leg ulcers, chronic anaemia, enlarged spleen and bouts of fainting. In developing countries victims of the disease survive the age of thirty whereas in developed countries life expectancy is much longer. In both cases the red blood cells alter their shape from oval to sickle if there is a reduction of oxygen.

It is now over twenty years since the black community settled in Britain. Until quite recently very little was heard of and apparently done about this serious genetic disorder. There is now evidence that the profession has been made aware of the need to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. Some hospitals automatically screen (or test) 'black' patients for evidence of sickle cell before anaesthesia is given: Dental hospitals certainly do so. A handful of clinics — those of them in London — give counselling (care and treatment) to victims of the disease, but these clinics are the initiative of individual doctors who are personally interested, perhaps on humanitarian grounds, and cannot adequately

deal with those who need such a service.

Some GPs are still disinterested and apathetic. What is not certain is to what extent efforts are being co-ordinated or integrated throughout the country. Some local Medical Officers of Health in London recently met to discuss this subject, agreed that action is needed and expressed their willingness to participate. They felt that the black community should be actively involved in the decision-making.

It is imperative that a national plan be drawn up to discuss the following recommendations among others:

The National Health Service should incorporate a national Sickle Cell Unit;

A system should be introduced to bring GPs up-to-date with the subject;
Personnel concerned with local authority medical services, education departments, school and employment departments, must be educated on sickle cell and its effects;

Counselling units should be established in hospitals around the country to serve defined geographical areas;

Hospitals should include in their routine test a screening test for this condition. Separate records should be kept and a system of relaying information to the patient's GP (in the case of a trait or disease) for the benefit of not only the patient but for possible screening of other members of that family;

The black community in particular must be educated on the disease and be actively encouraged and assisted in taking action.

NEWS BACKGROUND

"Let Not England Forget Her Precedents In Teaching Nations How To Live." Mr. Carr's Witch Hunt Is Now In Full Cry.

The Home Secretary enlisted the aid of Milton when he stood up to defend the Government's record on race relations at the recent Tory Party conference. Barely twelve hours after he had sat down to a standing ovation from the faithful, London police raided numbers of Asian homes and businesses in the largest mass round-up since the enactment of the 1971 Immigration Act. Their haul was so minute as to be ludicrous, but they managed to play havoc with community relations. RACE TODAY has been looking into the background of this latest series of 'Illegal Immigrant' raids.

Late in the afternoon of 10 October, Robert Carr was having a tough time at the Tory Party Conference trying to appease his critics from both sides of the party. In what the press was to later call a liberal and restrained speech, he was moved to stress the action the Government had taken to cut the number of immigrants entering the United Kingdom, and the positive affect the 1971 Immigration Act would have in ensuring that there could be no further large-scale immigration into the country.

'And yet,' said Mr. Carr to a good deal of right-wing heckling and a barely perceptible level of Young Conservative disbelief, 'even if by some magic means on 18 June 1970, we had been able to prevent a single further immigrant from coming here, the overwhelming bulk of this problem would still be with us. It is a problem. There is prejudice, and it is no good pretending there is not: there has always been prejudice in this country, and prejudice can never be quickly or easily resolved.'

The day before Lord Widgery, the Lord Chief Justice, had ruled in the High Court that Britain has no obligation to accept United Kingdom passport holders unless they have ties of blood or birth in this country. In this one ruling on the controversial 1971 Act, the Lord Chief Justice had interpreted the law as removing the right of any passport holder to come to the United Kingdom: he had also removed the rights of voucher holders, since the voucher system is itself not mentioned in the Act but only interpreted through the Rules.

When Mr. Carr got to his feet to present the official Government view, he needed all the considerable placatory skill at his command: 'The great majority of these coloured citizens are good, peaceful, hard-working citizens with the same ambitions as the rest of us. We have to see they do have the same opportunities.' And then quoting from Milton as his ally, Mr. Carr reminded us: 'Let not England forget her precedents in teaching people how to live.' He sat down to a standing ovation, a little booing, and the motion was carried overwhelmingly.

Barely twelve hours later, between forty and fifty of these good, peaceful, hardworking, coloured citizens' were to be reminded of what it is like to have the same opportunities as the rest of us as

police and immigration officials walked into their homes, without search warrants, abused them, searched through their possessions and detained them for hours in Leman Street police station.

"We in this country have a strong tradition of personal liberty, and once a person is in the community we do not expect him to carry an identity card and be subject to control."

The Rt. Hon. Robert Carr MP speaking at the Race Relations Board Annual Conference earlier this year.

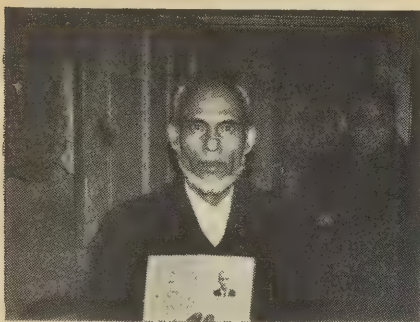
While Mr. Carr was finishing his speech, 48-year-old Nuruzzaman Khan was working in the kitchen of the Dreamland Indian restaurant in Tower Bridge Road, Bermondsey. Khan had been in England for eleven years, had worked in Manchester, Liverpool and London as a cook and waiter, and holds a British passport. That night as usual, he finished work just after two in the morning, and by the time the clearing up was finished, it was well after three before he crept upstairs to sleep. Next morning, at nine-thirty prompt, men from the immigration unit of the police force, accompanied by Immigration Officers entered the flat above the restaurant and, despite the fact that they had no warrant with them, searched the place thoroughly from top to bottom. Mr. Majumdar the proprietor had already left for market but his brother and their wives were all still home. They were able to show their passports, but Khan had left his in East London together with his other possessions as the Tower Bridge Road flat had been robbed earlier this year. The police were not satisfied with this explanation and took Khan away with them to Leman Street police station in the East End where they kept him locked up, unable to use the lavatory or have anything to eat until his passport was brought in for verification.

While in Leman Street, Khan saw 40-50 other people brought in for questioning. Amongst these were people like the Rahman brothers from Hessel Street, chicken butchers for the Muslim popula-

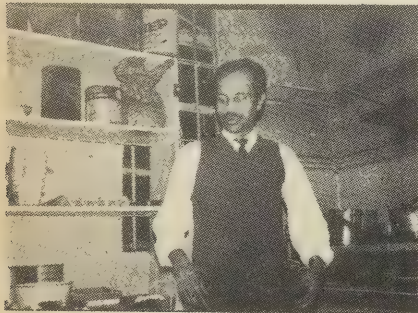
tion of East London and long-term residents of the area; Kuti and Shona Miah, more Muslim butchers from Hessel Street, and Furkan Ali who works for them. All were kept at Leman Street for six hours until passports or other identification could be fetched from relatives and friends spread as far apart as Ilford, Romford and Havering in Essex.

While the raids in East London were carried on almost at random, where a dispute between Landlord and tenant could provide enough reason for an anonymous phone call, in Whitfield Street in the West End police were more businesslike and cordoned off the whole street before questioning any likely-looking suspects with brown faces. 23-year-old Israil Agri, who arrived in Britain six years ago from Sylhets in Bangladesh, had also been working late the night before in the Agra restaurant where he is employed as a waiter. He was still asleep when a large number of police and immigration officials came in and demanded to see passports and identification of everyone present: Ali had a problem because his passport was at the Home Office and despite his official receipt for the document, he was forced to go down to Leman Street along with a number of other Bengalis picked up in the raids. He was kept at Leman Street, insulted by police and at times intimidated. Eventually he was freed after five hours when police learned from Lewisham police station that he had been checked out by them in 1970 and was indeed a legal immigrant. Ali's passport was at the Home Office while he applies for British citizenship: now he isn't sure he wants it and is instead thinking of living in the States where he thinks he will get a better welcome.

The Whitfield Street raids so annoyed the Camden Council for Community Relations that at their executive committee meeting on 25 October, they passed unanimously a strong letter to the Home Secretary demanding a public enquiry into the circumstances of the raids. But, unknown to the community relations workers, that very morning, a strong police force had again struck in the Whitfield Street area, this time in a rooming house in nearby Hanson Street. Number 23 is a large, gloomy old house which has been divided and subdivided into a number of flats and bedsitters. It now provides



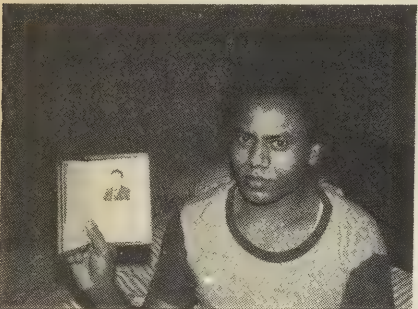
Kadar Meah : 62 years old, he had served in the Merchant Navy during the last war.



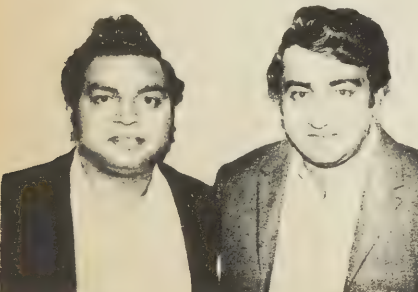
Nuruzzaman Khan : He had been working until three the previous morning when police searched.



Israil Ali : 23 years old, he's been here since 1966. The Home Office had his passport to check him.



Abdul Jabbar : He was still fast asleep when police burst into the room. He had to stay in bed while they searched.



The Patel brothers : Earlier witch-hunt victims, they had spent all day locked in a cell at Wembley Police Station.

accommodation for three European families and perhaps 80 Asians – mostly single men living two or three to a room and working in the restaurants of the West End.

Abdul Jabbar is a 33-year-old Bangladeshi who works as a cook in the West End. He was sound asleep when police entered his room at 7.30 in the morning. Together with his friends Quddus Mia and Kalamdar Ali, he had been detained in his bed for two hours, his room had been searched and his personal possessions strewn about the small cramped room: none of the men had been allowed to pee, had been insulted and abused by the police who didn't show warrants and had scant regard for the men's privacy as they searched through mail and private documents.

In another room, 62-year-old Kadar Meah, a British citizen who fought in the Second World War as a merchant seaman and took British citizenship because he thought Britain a 'civilised place' was also confined to his room for two hours while police went through everything he possesses. The first time in 32 years of residence in this country that Mr. Meah has had serious dealings with the British police and the only trouble after a life of travelling the world.

In a second-floor flat at Hanson Street Noor Uddin and his two flatmates were awakened by an insistent ringing at the bell: when the door was opened, police and immigration officers burst in and demanded to see passports. The others were able to produce theirs, but Uddin only had a Home Office letter dated 4 July 1973 acknowledging receipt of his passport, and his Employment Voucher which showed that he had first been admitted in 1963. This did not satisfy the officers, who took Uddin to Marylebone police station, took from him his valuables, tie and belt and left him in a cell for four hours while they checked him out with immigration authorities. At one o'clock they decided that he was a proper citizen after all and let him go.

None of the Asians involved in the Hanson Street raid saw a search warrant or discretionary deportation order in the hands of the officers who searched their premises. None of them were asked for any specific illegal immigrants by name: instead, it seems likely that Hanson Street as a prominent rooming house for a number of single Asian males looked like a reasonable target for a large-scale raid on suspicion by the police and immigration authorities.

The Score So Far : Examples of Harassment Recorded Since June

When Parliament approved of the retrospective nature of the 1971 Immigration Act at the end of June, one of the promises it heard from the Home Secretary was that there would be no 'witch-hunt' of illegal immigrants. It is interesting to note the number of cases of alleged harassment that have come to public attention: while the debate was at its height in the summer, Sidghup Khadri of the Pakistan Action Group was documenting cases where motorists had been stopped

for trivial motoring offences and then asked by police for their passports: in some cases they were taken to the police station until friends could bring documents in. Then there was the 29-year-old East African Asian woman who stopped to ask a policeman the way in Goodmayes, Essex and was taken to the police station until her passport could be brought in; the past president of the Indian Workers Association teaching in Hitchin who had his class disturbed by police acting on an anonymous tip off that he was illegal, the demand by the London Gas Board of black student applicants for summer vacation work that they produce passports before being employed, and the Leeds student who was asked for similar proof of identity by D.E. counter clerks.

Ealing Education Authority was asking parents for passports before registering children for school under the pretext of collecting figures for DES documentation until the implications of their actions were pointed out to them. Other cases which have come to light since the summer outbreak have been the 'Ghani' Asian-owned garment factory in the East End where 25 workers had to produce their passports in a police raid in August, the Dartford party which was raided in the same month and at which all the guests had to produce passports, the Bishops Stortford raid in which a family was raided and four men taken to the police station before passports could be produced, the Hitchin family who were raided and one of whom ended up in Pentonville before his passport could be found. There is additionally the case of Abdul Rashid Malik who was beaten by Southall police before being taken to the airport: this case is now under internal investigation. And there is the appalling story of 25-year-old Indian wrestler Surain Uppal, jailed for three months after a Special Branch raid in Wolverhampton, despite having a wife and child dependent on him. He was freed at the end of October without having been convicted.

Add to these cases those of the Patel family of Wembley where two brothers, Narendra and Babubhai, were detained in Wembley police station for a day in September without actually being arrested, and the large numbers of black people who have been searched by police and immigration officials after visits either to the airport to meet incoming relatives, or to branches of the Home Office to check on their own status or that of their family or friends, plus police checking addresses and overstepping the mark, and some idea of the size of the problem can be gained. Yet it seems likely that many cases never come to public attention as most immigrants understandably would rather not make anything of a fuss and perhaps line themselves up for future attention.

The Camden raids are thus the latest, and by far the most serious, in a series of raids and associated harassment that has been put onto the black community in Britain: yet Mr. Carr himself has said that he is not in favour of an obvious harassment. In his letter to Chief Constables –

which is an advisory document only since the Home Secretary has no direct control over Chief Constables, although he does over the Metropolitan area in which many of the raids have been taking place - the Home Secretary asked officers to avoid actions which could in any way be construed by immigrants as harassment, such as inspection of the passport of someone who comes to their notice in connection with a minor offence. Despite the fact that this circular didn't go out until a month after the legislation had been affirmed by Parliament (which may be taken as an indication of the Home Office's seriousness on the subject), Mr. Carr returned tangentially to the problem when he addressed the Race Relations Board Conference on 21 September: 'We in this country have a strong tradition of personal liberty, and once a person is in the community we do not expect him to carry an identity card and be subject to control at every end and turn.'

William Deedes, senior Conservative Party ideologue and Chairman of the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration returned to this identity cards theme at the Conservative Party conference when he suggested that a European-style pattern of identity card carrying may be a solution to the problem of illegal immigrants. This call was taken up the following day by T.A. Sandrock, the *Daily Telegraph's* Crime Correspondent, when he reported that while police welcome tougher controls on illegal immigration, their main call is still for identity cards for the entire public, complete with photograph and thumb print.

Who Authorised the Raids? A Curious Example of Buck-Passing

It is still not clear exactly who authorised the London raids, with police and Home Office passing the buck between themselves. David Lane, Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, justified the earlier raids at a Bow Group Conference by saying that they had resulted in the arrest of an illegal immigrant. Despite that, the role of the Illegal Immigration Unit at Scotland Yard, in particular the computerised picture that they are building up of the black community, has not been fully explained. What is already known is that the Department of Health and Social Security and the Home Office are co-operating in the exchange of information which would enable them to run the data of National Insurance registration through the computer against Home Office date of entry and thus check the identity of the illegal immigrants and the overstayers.

Many of those involved in the latest series of raids were Bengalis, and some welfare workers have suggested that many of them are working without cards: this makes it less likely that they will show up on computers at either the Home Office or the DHSS. They postulate that there will be more raids in the future to enable the police to check not just passports, but also address books, mail and known contacts and thus build up a computerised cognitive map of Bengalis in the same way as they have done on the

drug scene (the units are combined at Scotland Yard) or the bomb trials. The raids were one of the first initiatives of Chief Superintendent Price, who took over the Unit after the *April Diamond* fiasco.

Alderman Roger Jowell, Chairman of Camden Committee for Community Relations had a reply from the Home Secretary to his letter calling for a public enquiry into the events surrounding the 11 October raids. It is a reply that he considers totally unsatisfactory: in it, Mr. Carr suggests that in 'the course of ordinary police operations... the police acted on information relating specifically to 13 addresses in North West and East London which were searched', whereas when Mrs. Thatcher answered questions on the subject in the House of Commons on behalf of the Home Office, she said the searches related to 'the escape from Harmondsworth Detention Centre of a man refused admission to this country'. The Carr letter makes no reference to this man, and refers to five people detained as a result of the raids.

There are a number of other curiosities about Mr. Carr's letter: he refers to the raids as a 'routine police matter' yet in the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* questions on the matter, a Scotland Yard spokesman said that: 'This is a Home Office affair, and it is for them to make a comment, not the police.' In addition, the letter says that police should not simply question people at random, despite a number of eye witness reports that that is exactly what did happen.

Camden Committee for Community Relations is still pressing for a public enquiry, as is the Bangladesh Welfare Association, and the Whitfield Street Study Group - a community action group. The NCCL have issued a strongly worded statement on the raids, and even Mark Bonham Carter, chairman of the Community Relations Commission has pointed out that many of the people detained were legal residents: he went on to add that the Government's policy of 'No Witch Hunt' could carry conviction only if it is carried out by immigration officers as well as police, and Peter Tucker, administrative officer at the CRC has opened a file on the raids.

It is possible that smaller raids than the Camden ones have been taking place quite regularly since the Lords' decision in many cases, certainly those where fewer people were involved than Hanson Street and Whitfield Street. It's known that people are being searched, harassed and occasionally detained as the inexorable round up grinds on without any attendant publicity. This, of course, is just how the Government would prefer it. Yet under the provisions of the 1971 Act these people will never come to trial, nor will they have recourse to appeal. Instead the administrative judicial machinery will roll quietly on, weeding people out in ones and twos and upsetting them in tens and twenties with only the occasional tactical blunder or strategically necessary 'fishing expedition' to disturb the apparent calm of the surface. Still that's what life is like when England 'forgets not her precedents in teaching people how to live'.



23, Hanson Street, the block of flats in the West End occupied by 80 Asian working men. The police arrived in the early morning and kept them all in bed while they searched their rooms. The Home Office said it was up to the Yard, and the Yard said it was down to the Home Office and Mr. Carr didn't know much about it.



Hessel Street. A place with a life of its own in the East End until the early morning raids disturbed the peace.



They called in at Number Four



.... And they checked out Fourteen too.

Sex, Race and Working

In *Race Today*, June 1973, we published 'The Colony of the Colonized: notes on race, class and sex, by Avis Brown, in which she examined the caste position of blacks and women and the parallels of their struggles. She believed that, with a few exceptions, the black struggle had failed to fuse caste and class, and that women, because of their position, would be better able to do so. In criticising this analysis, Selma James examines caste and its relationship to class, and puts forward a strategy for women.

There has been enough confusion generated when sex, race and class have confronted each other as separate and even conflicting entities. That they are separate entities is self-evident. That they have proven themselves to be not separate, inseparable, is harder to discern. Yet if sex and race are pulled away from class, virtually all that remains is the truncated, provincial, sectarian politics of the white male metropolitan left. I hope to show in barest outline, first, that the working class movement is something other than that left have ever envisioned it to be. Second, locked within the contradiction between the discrete entity of sex or race and the totality of class is the greatest deterrent to working class power and at the same time the creative energy to achieve that power.

In our pamphlet which Avis Brown so generously referred to* we tackled '... the relation of women to capital and [the] kind of struggle we [can] effectively wage to destroy it' (p. 1), and draw throughout on the experience of the struggle against capital by Black people. Beginning with the *female* (caste) experience, we redefined class to include women. That redefinition was based on the unwaged labour of the housewife. We put it this way:

Since Marx, it has been clear that capital rules and develops through the wage, that is, that the foundation of capitalist society was the wage labourer and his or her direct exploitation. What has been neither clear nor assumed by the organisations of the working class movement is that precisely through the wage has the exploitation of the non-wage labourer been organised. This exploitation has been even more effective because the lack of a wage hid it. . . . *Where women are concerned their labour appears to be a personal service outside of capital.* (pp. 25-6)

But if the relation of caste to class where women are concerned presents itself in a hidden, mystified form, this mystification is not unique to women. Before we confront race, let us take an apparent diversion. The least powerful in the society are our children, also unwaged in a wage labour society. They were once (and in tribal society for example still are) an integral part of the productive activity of the community. The work they did was part of its total social labour and was acknowledged as such. Where capital is extending or has extended its rule, children are taken away from others in the community and forced to go to schools, against which the number of rebels is growing daily. Is their powerlessness a class question? Is their struggle against school the class struggle? We believe it is. Schools are institutions organised by capital to achieve its purposes through and against the child.

Capital . . . sent them to school not only because they are in the way of others' more 'productive' labour or only to indoctrinate them. The rule of capital through the wage compels every able-bodied person

to function, under the law of division of labour, and to function in ways that are if not immediately, then ultimately profitable to the expansion and extension of the rule of capital. That, fundamentally, is the meaning of school. *Where children are concerned, their labour appears to be learning for their own benefit.* (p. 26)

So here are two sections of the working class whose activity, one in the home, the other in the school, *appears* to be outside of the capitalist wage labour relation because they themselves are wageless. *In reality*, they are facets of capitalist production and its division of labour.

One, housewives, are involved in the production and (what is the same thing) reproduction of workers, what Marx calls *labour power*. They service those who are daily destroyed by working for wages and who need to be daily renewed; and they care for and discipline those who are being prepared to work when they grow up.

The other, children, are those who from birth are the objects of this care and discipline, who are trained in homes, in schools and in front of the telly to be future workers. But this has two aspects.

In the first place, for labour power to be reproduced in the form of children, these children must be coerced into accepting discipline and especially the discipline of working, of being exploited in order to be able to eat. In addition, however, they must be disciplined and trained to perform a certain kind of work. The labour that capital wants done is divided and each category parcelled out internationally as the life work, the destiny, the identity of specific sets of workers. The phrase often used to describe this is the international division of labour. We will say more of this later, but for now let the West Indian mother of a seven-year-old sum up her son's education with precision: 'They're choosing the street sweepers now.'

Those of us in the feminist movement who have torn the final veil away from this international capitalist division of labour to expose women's and children's *class* position, which was hidden by the particularity of their *caste* position, learnt a good deal of this from the Black movement. It is not that it is written down anywhere (though we discovered later it was in what would seem to some a strange place). A mass movement teaches less by words than by the power it exercises which, clearing away the debris of appearances, tells it like it is.

Just as the women's movement, being 'for' women and the rebellion of children being 'for' children, appears at first not to be about class,

The Black movement in the U.S. (and elsewhere) also began by adopting what appeared to be only a caste position in opposition to the racism of white male-dominated groups. Intellectuals in Harlem and Malcolm X, that great revolutionary, were both nationalists, both appeared to place colour above class when the white left were still chanting variations of 'Black and white unite and fight', or 'Negroes and Labour must join together'. The Black working class was able through this nationalism to *redefine class*: overwhelmingly Black and Labour were synonymous (with no other group was Labour as synony-

* 'The Colony of the Colonised: notes on race, class and sex'. Avis Brown, *Race Today*, June 1973. She refers to *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*, by Maria Dalla Costa and S. James, Falling Wall Press, 179 Richmond Road, Bristol (29p + 4p postage). Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from this pamphlet.

**WOMEN'S
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**GRASS
ROOTS**



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**BLACK
COMMUNITY
NEWS**

g Class Power

Selma James

mous — except perhaps with women), the demands of Blacks and the forms of struggle created by Blacks were the most comprehensive *working class struggle* . . . (p. 4)

It is not then that the Black movement 'wandered off into the class struggle', as Avis says. It *was* the class struggle and this took a while to sink into our consciousness. Why?

White male definition of class excluded blacks and women

One reason is because some of us wore the blinkers of the white male left, whether we knew it or not. According to them, if the struggle's not in the factory, it's not the class struggle. The real bind was that this left assured us they spoke in the name of Marxism. They threatened that if we broke from them, organisationally or politically, we were breaking with Marx and scientific socialism. What gave us the boldness to break, fearless of the consequences, was the power of the Black movement. We found that redefining class went hand-in-hand with rediscovering a Marx the left would never understand.

There were deeper reasons too why caste and class seemed contradictory. It appears often that the interests of Blacks are contradicted by the interests of whites, and it is similar with men and women. To grasp the *class* interest when there seems not one but two, three, four, each contradicting the other, is one of the most difficult revolutionary tasks, in theory and practice, that confronts us.

Another source of confusion is that not all women, children or Black men are working class. This is only to say that within the movements which these form are layers whose struggle tends to be aimed at moving up in the capitalist hierarchy rather than at destroying it. And so within each movement there is a struggle about which class interest the movement will serve. But this is the history also of white male workers' movements. There is no class 'purity', not even in shop floor organisation. The struggle by workers *against* organisations they formed there and in the society generally — trade unions, Labour parties, etc. — is the class struggle.*

Identity - caste - the very substance of class

Let's put the relation of caste to class another way. The word 'culture' is often used to show that class concepts are narrow, philistine, inhuman. Exactly the opposite is the case. A national culture which has evolved over decades or centuries may appear to deny that society's relation to international capitalism. It is a subject too wide to go into deeply here but one basic point can be quickly clarified. The life-style unique to themselves which a people develop, once they are enmeshed by capitalism, in response to and in rebellion against it, cannot be understood at all except as the totality of their capitalist

* For an analysis of the antagonistic relationship between workers and trade unions see S. James, *Women, the Unions and Work or what is not to be done*, London, Notting Hill Group, March 1972.

lives. To delimit culture is to reduce it to a decoration of daily life.* Culture is plays and poetry about the exploited; ceasing to wear mini-skirts and taking to trousers instead; the clash between the soul of Black Baptism and the guilt and sin of white Protestantism. Culture is also the shrill of the alarm clock that rings at 6 a.m. when a Black woman in London wakes her children to get them ready for the baby minder. Culture is how cold she feels at the bus stop and then how hot in the crowded bus. Culture is how you feel on Monday morning at eight when you clock in wishing it was Friday, wishing your life away. Culture is the speed of the line or the weight and smell of dirty hospital sheets, and you meanwhile thinking what to make for tea that night. Culture is making the tea while your man watches the news on the telly.

And culture is an 'irrational woman' walking out of the kitchen into the sitting room and without a word turning off the telly 'for no reason at all'.

From where does this culture spring which is so different from a man's if you are a woman and different too from a white woman's if you are a Black woman? Is it auxiliary to the class struggle (as the white left has it) or is it more fundamental than the class struggle (as Black Nationalists and Radical Feminists have it) because it is special to your sex, your race, your age, your nationality and the moment in time when you are these things?

Our identity, our social roles, the way we are seen, appears to be disconnected from our capitalist functions. To be liberated from them (or through them) appears to be independent from our liberation from capitalist wage slavery. In our view, identity — caste — is the very substance of class.

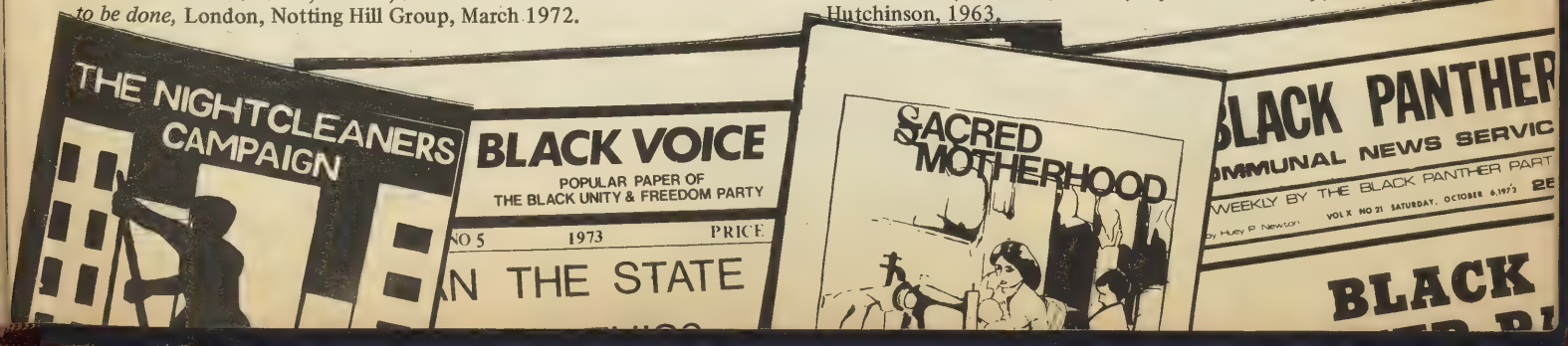
Here is the 'strange place' where we found the key to the relation of class to caste written down most succinctly. Here is where the international division of labour is posed as a power relationship within the working class. It is Volume I of Marx's *Capital*.

Manufacture . . . develops a hierarchy of labour powers, to which there corresponds a scale of wages. If, on the one hand, the individual labourers are appropriated and annexed for life by a limited function; on the other hand, the various operations of the hierarchy are parcelled out among the labourers according to both their natural and their acquired capabilities. (Moscow 1958, p. 349)

In two sentences is laid out the deep material connection between racism, sexism, national chauvinism and the chauvinism of the generations who are working for wages against children and old age pensioners who are wageless, who are dependants.

A hierarchy of labour powers and scale of wages to correspond. Racism and sexism training us to acquire and develop certain capabilities at the expense of all others. Then these acquired capabilities are taken to be our nature and fix our functions for life, and fix also the quality of our mutual relations. So planting cane or tea is not a job for white people

* For the best demystification of culture I know which shows, for example, how West Indian cricket has carried in its heart racial and class conflicts, see C.L.R. James, *Beyond a Boundary*, London, Hutchinson, 1963.



and changing nappies is not a job for men and beating children is not violence. Race, sex, age, nation, each an indispensable element of the international division of labour. *Our feminism bases itself on a hitherto invisible stratum of the hierarchy of labour powers – the housewife – to which there corresponds no wage at all.*

To proceed on the basis of a hierarchical structure among waged and unwaged slavery is not, as Avis accuses the working class of doing, 'concentrating so exclusively on the economic determinants of the class struggle'. The work you do and the wages you receive are not merely 'economic' but social determinants, determinants of social power. It is not the working class but organisations which claim to be of and for that class who reduce the continual struggle for social power by that class into 'economic determinants' - greater capitalist control for a pittance more a week. Wage rises that unions negotiate often turn out to be wage standstills or even cuts, either through inflation or through more intense exploitation (often in the form of productivity deals) which more than pays the capitalist back for the rise. And so people assume that this was the intention of workers in demanding, for example, more wages, more money, more 'universal social power', in the words of Marx.

The social power relations of the sexes, races, nations and generations are precisely, then, particularised forms of class relations. These power relations within the working class weaken us in the power struggle between the classes. They are the particularised forms of indirect rule, one section of the class colonising another and through this capital imposing its own will on us all. One of the reasons why these so-called working class organisations have been able so to mediate the struggle is that we have, internationally, allowed them to isolate 'the working class' which they identify as white, male and over 21, from the rest of us. The unskilled white male worker, an exploited human being who is increasingly disconnected from capital's perspective for him to work, to vote, to participate in its society, he also, racist and sexist he is, recognises himself as the victim of these organisations. But housewives, Blacks, young people, workers from the Third World, excluded from the definition of class, have been told that their confrontation with the white male power structure in the metropolis is an 'exotic historical accident'. Divided by the capitalist organisation of society into factory, office, school, plantation, home and street, we are divided too by the very institutions which claim to represent our struggle collectively as a class.

Struggles in the community as well as on the factory floor

In the metropolis, the Black movement was the first section of the class massively to take its autonomy from these organisations, and to break away from the containment of the struggle only in the factory. When Black workers burn the centre of a city, however, white left eyes, especially if they are trade union eyes, see race, not class.

The women's movement was the next major movement of the class in the metropolis to find for itself a power base outside the factory as well as in it. Like the Black movement before it, to be organisationally autonomous of capital and its institutions, women and their movement had also to be autonomous of that part of the 'hierarchy of labour powers' which capital used specifically against them. For Blacks it was whites

For women, it was men. For Black women it is both.

Strange to think that even today, when confronted with the autonomy of the Black movement or the autonomy of the women's movement, there are those who talk about this 'dividing the working class'. Strange indeed when our experience has told us that in order for the working class to unite in spite of the divisions which are inherent in its very structure – factory versus plantation versus home versus school – those at the lowest levels of the hierarchy must themselves find the key to their weakness, must themselves find the strategy which will attack that point and shatter it, must themselves find their own modes of struggle.

The Black movement has not in our view 'integrated into capitalism's plural society' (though many of its 'leaders' have), it has not 'been subsumed to white working class strategy'. (Here I think Avis is confusing white working class *struggle* with trade union/Labour Party *strategy*. They are mortal enemies, yet they are often taken as identical.) The Black movement has, on the contrary, in the United States challenged and continues to challenge the most powerful capitalist State in the world. The most powerful at home and abroad. When it burnt down the centres of that metropolis and challenged all constituted authority, it made the way for the rest of the working class everywhere to move in its own specific interests. We women moved. This is neither an accident nor the first time events have moved in this sequence.

It is not an accident because when constituted power was confronted, a new possibility opened for all women. For example, the daughters of men to whom was delegated some of this power saw through the noble mask of education, medicine and the law for which their mothers had sacrificed their lives. Oh yes, marriage to a man with a good salary would be rewarded by a fine house to be imprisoned in, and even a Black servant; they would have privilege for as long as they were attached to that salary which was not their own. But power would remain in the hands of the white male power structure. They had to renounce the privilege even to strike out for power. Many did. On the tide of working class power which the Black movement expressed in the streets, and all women expressed in the day-to-day rebellion in the home, the women's movement came into being.

It is not the first time either that a women's movement received its impetus from the exercise of power by Black people. The Black slave who formed the Abolitionist Movement and organised the Underground Railway for the escape to the North also gave white women – and again the more privileged of them – a chance, an occasion to transcend the limitations in which the female personality was imprisoned. Women, trained always to do for others, left their homes not to free themselves – that would have been outrageous – but to free 'the slave'. They were encouraged by Black women, ex-slaves like Sojourner Truth, who suffered because, being women, they had been the breeders of labour power on the plantation. But once those white women had taken that first decisive step out of the feminine mould, they confronted more sharply their own situation. They had to defend their right, as women, to speak in public against slavery. They were refused, for example, seating at the Abolitionist conference of 1840 in London because they were women. By 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, they called their own conference, for women's rights. There was a male speaker. He was a leading Abolitionist. He was Black. He had been a slave. His

WHY MISS WORLD?
WHY WHY WORLD
WHY WHY WORLD
WHY WHY MISS
WHY MISS WORLD
WHY WHY WORLD



THE BLACK SCHOLAR

The Myth of the
VAGINAL ORGASM

ANNE KOEDT

BLACK LIBERATION
STRATEGIES REVISIT

name was Frederick Douglass.

And when young white women headed South on the Freedom Ride buses in the early '60s of this century and discovered that their male (white and Black) comrades had a special place for them in the hierarchy of struggle, as capital had in the hierarchy of labour power, history repeated itself — almost. This time it was not for the vote but for a very different goal that they formed a movement. It was a movement for liberation.

The parallels that are drawn between the Black and women's movements can always turn into an 11-plus: who is more exploited? Our purpose here is not parallels. We are seeking to describe that complex interweaving of forces which is the working class; we are seeking to break down the power relations among us on which are based the hierarchical rule of international capital. For no man can represent us as women any more than whites can speak about and themselves end the Black oppression. Nor do we seek to convince men of our feminism. Ultimately they will be 'convinced' by our power. We offer them what we offer the most privileged women: power over their enemies. The price is an end to their privilege over us.

Why wages for housework?

The strategy of feminist class struggle is, as we have said, based on the wageless woman in the home. Whether she also works for wages outside the home, her labour of producing and reproducing the working class weighs her down, weakens her capacity to struggle — she doesn't even have time. Her position in the wage structure is low especially but not only if she is Black. And even if she is relatively well placed in the hierarchy of labour powers (rare enough!), she remains defined as a sexual object of men. Why? Because as long as most women are housewives part of whose function in reproducing labour power is to be the sexual object of men, no woman can escape that identity. We demand wages for the work we do in the home. And that demand for a wage from the State is, first, *a demand to be autonomous of men on whom we are now dependent*. Secondly, we demand money without working out of the home, and open for the first time the possibility of refusing forced labour in factories and in the home itself.

It is here in this strategy that the lines between the revolutionary Black and the revolutionary feminist movements begin to blur. This perspective is founded on the least powerful — the wageless. Re-enforcing capital's international division of labour is a standing army of unemployed who can be shunted from industry to industry, from country to country. The Third World is the most massive repository of this industrial reserve army. (The second most massive is the kitchen in the metropolis.) Port of Spain, Calcutta, Algiers, the Mexican towns south of the U.S. border are the labour power for shit work in Paris, London, Frankfurt and the farms of California and Florida. What is their role in the revolution? How can the wageless struggle without the lever of the wage and the factory? We do not pose the answers — we can't. But we pose the question in a way which assumes that the unemployed have not to go to work in order to subvert capitalist society.

Housewives *working* without a pay packet in the home may also have a job outside of their homes. The subordination to the wage of the man in the home and the subordinating nature of that labour weakens the woman wherever else she is working, and regardless of race. Here is the basis for Black and

white women to act together, 'supported' or 'unsupported', not because the antagonism of race is overcome, but because we both need the autonomy that the wage *and the struggle for the wage* can bring. Black women will know in what organisations (with Black men, with white women, *with neither*) to make that struggle. *No one else can know.*

We don't agree with Avis that 'the Black American struggle failed to fulfil its potential role as a revolutionary vanguard . . .', if by 'vanguard' is meant the basic propellant of class struggle in a particular historical situation. It *has* used 'the specificity of its experience — as a nation and as a class both at once — to redefine class and the class struggle itself.' Perhaps the theoreticians have not, but then they must never be confused with the movement. Only as a vanguard has that struggle begun to clarify the vital questions of our age, the organisational unity of the working class as we now perceive it on an international level.

It is widely presumed that the Vanguard Party on the Leninist model embodies that organisational unity. Since the Leninist model assumes a vanguard expressing the total class interest, it bears no relation to the reality we have been describing, where no one section of the class can express the experience and interest, and pursue the struggle, for any other section. The formal organisational expression of a general class strategy does not yet anywhere exist.

Let me quote finally from a letter written against one of the organisations of the Italian extra-parliamentary left who, when we had a feminist symposium in Rome last year and excluded men, called us fascists and attacked us physically.

. . . The traditional attack on the immigrant worker, especially but not exclusively if he or she is Black (or Southern Italian), is that her presence threatens the gains of the native working class. Exactly the same is said about women in relation to men. The anti-racist (i.e. anti-nationalist and anti-sexist) point of view — the point of view, that is, of struggle — is to discover the organisational weakness which permits the most powerful sections of the class to be divided from the less powerful, thereby allowing capital to play on this division, defeating us. The question is, in fact, one of the basic questions which the class faces today. Where Lenin divided the class between the advanced and the backward, a subjective division, we see the division along the lines of capitalist organisation, the more powerful and the less powerful. It is the experience of the less powerful that when workers in a stronger position (that is, men with a wage in relation to women without one, or whites with a higher wage than Blacks) gain a 'victory', it may not be a victory for the weaker and even may represent *a defeat for both*. For in the disparity of power within the class is precisely the strength of capital.*

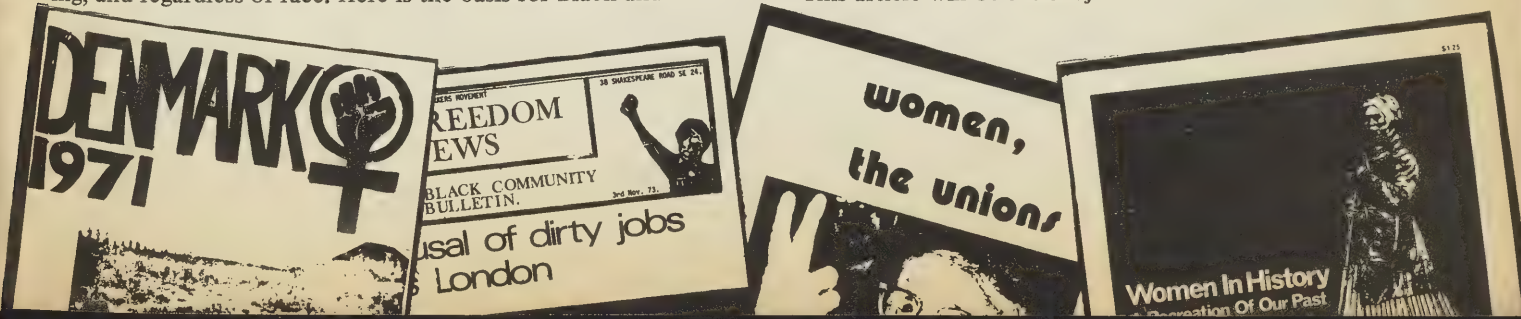
How the working class will ultimately unite organisationally, we don't know. We do know that up to now many of us have been told to forget our own needs in some wider interest which was never wide enough to include us. And so we have learnt by bitter experience that *nothing unified and revolutionary will be formed until each section of the exploited will have made its own autonomous power felt.*

Power to the sisters and therefore to the class.

* From a letter by Lotta Femminista and the International Feminist Collective, reprinted in *L'Offensiva, Musolini, Turin 1972* (pp. 18-9).

This article is being expanded into a pamphlet to be published by Falling Wall Press, Bristol. In it the redefinition of the working class will be applied to those who have been called, for want of a more accurate term, 'the peasantry'.

This article will be the subject of next month's BACKLASH



BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to last month's supplement on **Black People and the Police**.

Sir,

Darcus Howe's fine article, 'Fighting Back', in the December issue, permits some connections that may not be obvious on the surface. And it also raises some questions that flow from those connections.

It is not difficult to see the link between the West Indian youth that he writes of and a large and scattered section of the population called 'housewives'. Housewives may not confront the police very often en masse, but they constantly confront other officers of the State like rent collectors, social workers, magistrates, and school administrators. More important, both housewives and young Blacks are seen by industry as sources of cheap labour and a means of holding wages, in general, down.

Sometimes the two are spoken of together and compared: a recent study of the EEC labour force pointed out that housewives could be mobilised for factory work without causing the 'social problems' that the immigrants (by which they mean Blacks mainly) would cause. By 'social problems' is meant, we can suppose, organised resistance to capital's rule. Our rulers expect no 'social problems' to emerge from a more universal employment of women. (But women may surprise them.)

Howe writes, 'the young unemployed, in refusing to do capital's shitwork, have added power to those at work.' Women too no longer see the extra job outside the home as liberating. Industry is having to make concessions like 'flexible' hours in order to attract them in the numbers it wants. This sop too results from a resistance that pays benefits to waged workers in general.

The question that arises, and Howe did not have the space to explore it in his short but seminal article, is how the resistance of West Indian youth affects or is expressed by the young West Indian woman. Like all women, she has even greater pressures to resist than the male; even more shitwork is offered her; she has less power, less money; she has more work and responsibility in the family (whether with her parents or with a man) for which she gets no wage. Rewards and remunerations for her efforts are in even shorter measure than they are for white women.

At least half of West Indian youth are female. I, for one, would like to hear about the role they are playing in the family, in the community, as Blacks and as women in the struggle to resist capital's greed for our muscles and brains, for our lives. How are they 'fighting back'?

Priscilla Allen

Sir,

The articles by Darcus Howe and Ian Macdonald put into essential context the conflict between black people and the police. As a black group based within a community we face and encounter the problem everyday. Darcus Howe places the unemployed at the forefront of the struggle between black workers and the state, and gives a brief history of the organisations and institutions which the black community sets up for itself. It is through such action that the conventional meaning of the term 'unemployed' has essentially changed. Survival without a wage is a full time occupation and one that is capable of generating the weapons of resistance to Capital's manoeuvres to control and destroy a community. The political refusers of a whole stratum of work are the new and embattled section of the working class. The community is their shelter and their weapon. They are the section of the working class that has carried the withdrawal of labour under Capital's reign, to its final conclusion.

This refusal to work by a substantial and growing part of the black population, is the single important factor causing the crisis of the inner city which so many politicians, planners and sociologists pretend to be worried about. As we pointed out in *Race Today*, August 1973, and as we consistently point out in our own paper *Freedom News*, the division of labour within the police force into patrolmen, Special Patrol Groups, Asian harassment gangs etc., is a result of the different relationship that sections of black workers have to jobs, wages and work.

During the recent strike at Standard Telephones and Cables in north London, Asian workers were threatened with police 'investigation' about the legality of their status as immigrants, if they supported the Caribbean workers on the picket line. We see this fragmentation of the black section of the class as both a strength and a weakness. It allows the agencies of capital to divide Asians against Caribbeans, young against old, and on the other hand, the refusal of work by one section of the class accelerates the militancy of those already at work by putting them in a stronger bargaining position.

The refusal by a large section of young workers to enter the labour market on the buyer's terms and at the buyer's price, is the root cause of the police assault on communities such as Brixton. Nevertheless, the state uses all the means at its control to reduce all black workers to productive ciphers in the mass labour market. The Immigration Act '71 must be seen in this context as it seeks to import black labour on the basis of one person (no rights for dependants) for one restricted job, for a specific length of time. Police, the courts, and deportation procedures and threats are applied controls to reduce the labour force of black people already in the country to a similar

exploitative extreme.

Both Tory and Labour work hand in hand at this task by supporting it with complementary planning. For instance, the government and Lambeth Council (Labour) make no secret of using 'redevelopment' as a ploy in this offensive. In the report of intent on the redevelopment of Brixton they mention 'social engineering' as one of their objectives. They intend to use housing to bring in better consumers. In other words their planning amounts to a 'blacks out, middle-class in' policy. We suggest that the pattern for the police was framed by the social engineers of Notting Hill, the community you describe, and it is now being generalised to cover most black communities in England.

These measures, and the take over of the community's institutions as well as the setting up of youth clubs and projects is, as you say, a threat to the autonomy of the black population. While this motive of co-option is very clear, the youth who are supposed to be disciplined or kept occupied by these clubs and projects are in the process of turning them into their very opposites. They use these institutions for the organisation of their particular subversive function. As in the Metro in Notting Hill, the battle for control is fought every day in every youth club which caters for black youth. To this section of the working class, control of their own institutions, covert and overt, is essentially linked to their survival. The success of their resistance is the only means to the survival of our black communities and is, at this stage, our contribution to the struggles of the British working class.

Black Workers Movement

They think they don't need ideology, strategy or tactics. And yet, without discipline or direction, they'll end up washing cars or unclaimed bodies in the city-state's morgue.

George Jackson

Sir,

The past year has seen a multiplicity of proffered strictures on the problem: Gus John's/Derek Humphries', *Police Power and the Black Community*; Stanislaus Pullé's, *Report into Immigrant/Police Relations in Ealing*; Select Committee on Immigration; *Report on Police/Immigrant Relations*; and now a *Race Today* (December, 1973) supplement to 'coincide' with which the Heath Conservative Government has 'timely... published its *White Paper on Police/Immigrant Relations in England and Wales*.' A curious sentiment indeed to be expressed by Ian Macdonald in his editorial. (Is there never smoke without fire?)

Thesis I. Ian Macdonald: 'The creation of the modern police coincides [that word again] with the rise of wage labour. Today the police are concerned with the terms on which black youth enters productive employment'. In 1798, the birth of its modern formation, 'the police was a question of political economy' (p. 331). 'The creation of the first modern police force, which was taken over by the State in 1800, can therefore be seen as doing two things: (1) regulating the conditions of class struggle, and (2) tying the working class to the wage, and thus to **very particular** conditions under which they can produce and reproduce their labour power' (p. 331-2). It is doubtful that this chronological one-to-one correspondence in *origins* of wage labour (the proletariat) and a *power centre* of the ruling class *State*, the police, methodologically sound or theoretically thinkable. But I will come back to this in another place. According to the thesis, the police have not since, essentially, moved from their concern of *political economy*, except that whereas then it was a matter of the terms of white labour power, today it is a matter of the terms of black labour power and the political refusal of a section of it (the unemployed) to work. This is not the only conclusion that could be drawn from Macdonald's tiny circle, but it is enough for the moment.

Interesting thesis; though wasted somewhat. I should like to interrogate it with four questions and a few comments which in no way exhaust everything that I should like to ask, or say. (1) Is the political refusal of work by the black unemployed an effect of their unemployment, or the other way around? Either way the evidence implicitly given by Howe – which is of two types (a) under-employment in the urban sections in the Caribbean and its resulting lifestyles; (b) unfilled job vacancies in the service sector of the British economy which has traditionally recruited most heavily from the black working class – is open to interpretations other than that given; in any event it directs our attention away from the substantive theoretical issues. But I will not be awkward, and leave this to one side. (2) Is this same phenomenon, of a political refusal of work by black unemployed, to be found operating in the white working class; Or is the phenomenon a specifically distinctive feature of the black working class? who forms (to give a thesis of *The Black Liberator* comrades) the *sub-proletarian stratum of the British working class*. In short, are we correct in thinking that one of the specificities of the sub-

The political refusal of work thesis can only cope with these problems if it can explain the presence of black workers as the creation of a *Reserve Army of Labour* (of a special type) to be used productively/unproductively when the economy demands. This is why the *sub-proletarian* concept is so *decisive*, because it enables us to think the complexity of the problem at all its levels. Black workers do form the *sub-proletarian stratum* of the general working class which decisive indices are: (a) they are super-exploited (like productively employed white female labour power); (b) this means that a relatively greater proportion of surplus value is extracted from them. This thesis flatly contradicts Howe's thesis of the subversive role of the political refusal of work which has no convincing empirical, let alone theoretical, basis. There is evidence to show that TBL's thesis is concrete; (c) they are exploited/oppressed at two different levels: level I, as black workers (super-exploited); level II, as a black minority they are racially oppressed (racism). *We call this mechanism the dual dimension of the oppression of black workers.*

Kwame Nkrumah

Dropping out is a juvenile myth. In the conditions of modern urban society, with productive relations which spread out

Black youth must fight for their rights, not by dropping out, but by pushing in; by demanding the right to skills, the right to struggle for full employment; the right to join a militant, organised, working class which will both challenge low wages, bad conditions and insecurity, and which will also take up the fight to end the unjust system in which we live today.

'Sex, Race and Working Class Power', by Selma James, will be the subject of next month's Backlash.

From Montgomery to Detroit

... American negroes have gone their own way, and in intellectual matters (for example, the study of negro history) as well as in practical, they have in the past 25 years created a body of political achievement both in striking at discrimination and influencing American civilization as a whole, which makes them one of the authentic outposts of the new society. Perhaps the most striking example of this are the negro workers in industrial plants. *Sensitized by their whole lives against racial discrimination and having to be alert in the plant to prevent themselves being discriminated against, they begin by being a militant formation to protect themselves. They soon end by being in the very forefront of all actions against management* (C.L.R. James, *Facing Reality* [1958]).

During the last few months, black American workers (men and women) have carried on significant struggles in the auto industry with a series of confrontation with union and management. The Wild-Cat strike (the unofficial strike, to us) is their major weapon.

Race Today records below the details of two such struggles in which it is clear are embodied the sharp experiences of the battles of the black working class from the Montgomery boycott of 1955 until today. We in *Race Today* maintain that these confrontations which occur in the vast industrial plants of the USA are central to the race question, but we add that to confine them rigidly in terms of race, is to make a fundamental mistake in assessing their impact on the whole of American society, and consequently the world. Whereas in the USA, as in Britain, the term black is overwhelmingly synonymous with labour, the struggle for racial equality and the emergence of the new socialist society are equally synonymous.

Larry Carter and Isaac Shorter are two black American workers employed at Chrysler's Jefferson Auto plant in Detroit, U.S.A.

On 23 July 1973 both these workers occupied a metal cage that contains equipment supplying electricity to the metal shop assembly line. Carter and Shorter shut off the power and demanded the firing of a supervisor, Thomas Woolsey, plus complete amnesty for their action. They refused to have the union (United Auto Workers) negotiate on their behalf; instead they conducted negotiations openly with management in the full presence of their fellow workers.

The following interview with Carter and Shorter originally appeared in *The Fifth Estate*, a newspaper which covers the activities of workers in Detroit.

FE: Would you say that Woolsey is characteristic of Jefferson plant foremen?

Isaac: There are more people like Woolsey still in there. But even if they put a black person in Woolsey's place, the conditions would be the same. Because with all those orders coming down from Chrysler's heads and with the type of people that control Chrysler, as far as being capitalist, the same conditions are going to exist.

FE: So you don't see the conditions in Jefferson as being totally a question of racism?

Isaac: No, no. Racism is a factor in the plant, but that place would still be messed up even if there wasn't any racism on the part of supervisors.

We can't change the conditions in the plant by asking for another foreman. The conditions will still be the same.

FE: What do you think would really change the conditions?

Isaac: Well, we have to deal with the total conditions in the country and the need for a change from capitalism to socialism.

FE: Now, if you don't think that getting rid of one supervisor changes anything fundamentally, then why did you sit in there to get rid of Thomas Woolsey?

Isaac: You see, during the time that we had been passing around petitions on the matter, we didn't just say that all we wanted was to get rid of Woolsey. This is the thing that the *Free Press* and the *News* didn't talk about. We didn't tell the workers that all we wanted was to get rid of Woolsey. We told them that we wanted to get rid of Woolsey and the type of things that Woolsey was doing. And also the conditions in the plant and also the fact that Chrysler is engaged in exploiting us. And we also talked about the capitalist system.

But as far as the specific demands, we knew that we couldn't demand that Chrysler share the profits before we'd

get out of that cage. That would have been impossible, the way that the system is set up. Getting rid of Woolsey was more or less of an educational piece to prove the power that we workers have.

FE: How did the union relate to the action?

Larry: Well, on Monday, July 23, we turned in the petitions signed by 240 workers demanding that they get rid of Woolsey. I told the Chief Steward to bring me some response during that day. At the end of the day he hadn't moved on it at all.

Isaac: We knew already that the petition couldn't remove Woolsey.

And then we had also tried to con-



Isaac Shorter (left), 25, comes from Cleveland, Mississippi. In Cleveland he was chairman of the local National Committee to Combat Fascism (an arm of the Black Panther Party) from 1969 to 1970. He moved to Los Angeles where he worked at a Chrysler plant until it cut back production and he was laid off. In September 1971 he came to Detroit under the Chrysler programme of shifting workers to different plants when work slows down in one region.

Larry Carter (right) comes from Pensacola, Florida. He is 22 years old and worked for a Coca Cola bottling plant in Florida until he was fired for participating in a unionisation effort there. He came to Detroit in September 1971 and hired on at Jefferson.

vince Woolsey to lighten up on everybody. We told our foreman to tell Woolsey to come over and talk with us. So he did and we ran the whole thing on him. How all us are workers and all us are oppressed. All us are being exploited by Chrysler. But he denies this. He denies all that. He don't consider himself as being part of us. As being a worker.

FE: You think that foremen are pretty much in the same position as hourly workers?

Isaac: Right. They are. They ain't nothing but proletarians. They're in the same class as us. Woolsey serves the interests of Chrysler and we do too. Chrysler uses him pretty much like Chrysler uses us. Because if Chrysler said to Woolsey to go out there and use the spot-welding gun, Woolsey would have to do it. But if he was a plant manager, he wouldn't be like that. A plant manager and a foreman is a different thing.

Chrysler is using the plant manager too, but the foreman is much closer to production and they are using him much more like a worker than a manager. The foreman usually comes out of the proletariat and the foreman is part of the proletariat.

FE: How do you think your action affected the UAW leadership?

Isaac: Well, Douglas Fraser said that we was hi-jackers and plus we don't consider this as being no sit-in. For the simple reason that hi-jacking is an individual thing. You see, when we climbed over that fence and pushed that button, it became the workers' thing, it became the workers' struggle.

FE: Now, there were 200 or so workers who eventually sat down around the cage to protect you. When did they make it clear that they were not going to allow anyone to mess with you?

Isaac: The workers made it clear when the arc-welders were trying to torch the cable that we wrapped around the door of the cage. I put my hands around the cable and the workers said, 'There will be bloodshed if you put the torch to his hands'. So they didn't let the guy come in no more.

FE: Now, I just want to hit on one other thing. Apparently, the international union eventually supported both of your demands — for firing Woolsey and for amnesty. My question is, do you think that the union supported you out of conviction that you were right, or what was their reason for supporting you?

Isaac: Now, they did support our demands but they did not support our position that we wanted to deal directly with

management. Because the union has been going behind closed doors to negotiate with management and the workers don't even know what's going on. And the workers couldn't even voice their opinions on it. Just like now with the contract talks. Do you think the workers know what's going on in those talks?

Larry: We demanded that the company come out front and negotiate with us and that's why it took so long, because they didn't want to come out front.

Isaac: You see, we just put the union to the side. All we wanted the union to do was just stand aside and witness what's going on. And this is what they did. They didn't have anything to say. In the end it was me and Larry negotiating with management. And everything that we said to put down on the paper, went down on the paper. And management signed it. And that was it.

FE: If you had dealt through the union, do you think that you would have come out as well?

Larry: No. They would have come down with the word, that they would get rid of Woolsey and there would be no repercussions, but they would not have come up front and dealt with us. That's why it took so much time.

Isaac: You see, we wanted them to come out and deal with us in front of the workers and if the workers had anything to say on the matter, they could voice their opinion. And they didn't want to do that, but they ended up doing it about 7.30 that evening.

FE: In other words, you wanted this to be done publicly in order to have the other workers standing around to voice their opinions and decide whether it was a fair settlement or not?

Larry: Right. And we couldn't even tell the difference between the union representatives and management, the way they was begging us to come out of that cage. Especially just before Second Shift.

FE: Does this mean that you don't feel that there is any use in working through the union?

Isaac: No. The main thing is, you must have the power. And I think we helped to show that workers do have the power, if they will use it. And now that Jefferson workers are more aware of this, I think we can all move forward as far as taking over UAW Local 7.

We will move within the union, as well as outside of the union. We will not be bound by the union procedures in all cases, but we will attempt to transform the union. We know that there is a positive as well as a negative in UAW, but the predominant factor is negative. So what we're going to try to do is to correct this and make the union play a more positive role for the workers.



About 2,000 women workers at Gateway Industries (makers of auto seat belts for Chrysler, Ford and General Motors) staged a one-day strike on 10 September in opposition to their union's collusion with management.

The strikers were disgusted with the terms of a new contract and the failure of their union leaders (Teamster Local 781, of Warehousemen and Helpers) to support their demands.

The old contract expired on 1 September and the union official granted the company an eight-day extension without consulting the rank and file. The workers decided to take matters into their own hands and went on strike immediately. As a result they secured a new one-year contract which provided (1) an 80¢/hr. raise; (2) a cost of living escalator clause to keep up with inflation and rising prices; and (3) a 19¢ rise written into the next contract.

Compare what they won by their independent action with the union's original two-year contract which called for a meagre 35¢/hr. increase, no cost of living clause and no mention of working conditions.

Mark My Words

Ian Macdonald

Ian MacDonald takes a critical look at Sir Robert Mark's Dimpleby Lecture.

Sir Robert Mark's attack on the jury system and the legal profession is nothing new. In 1751 the pioneer, Bow St. Magistrate, Henry Fielding wrote in much the same vein about gangs and lawyers who defended them:

There are at this time a great Gang of Rogues, whose Number falls little short of a Hundred, who are incorporated in one Body, have officers and a Treasury; and have reduced theft and Robbery into a regular system. There are [members] of this Society of Men who appear in all Disguises, and mix in most Companies. Nor are they better versed in every Art of cheating, thieving, and robbing, than they are armed with every Method of evading the Law If they fail in rescuing the Prisoner or (which seldom happens) in bribing or deterring the Prosecutor, they have for their last Resource some rotten Members of the Law to forge a Defence for them, and a great Number of false Witnesses ready to support it¹

In a jury trial the one really unpredictable factor in the court is the jury. There are various times in history when the independant voice of the jury has threatened the state's control of the trial process exercised through the judges. The history of jury trial is therefore marked by several attempts to bring the jury more and more within the control of the court, and shows a progressive reduction of the field in which they can operate. Already 90 per cent of trials are in magistrate's courts where the result is a foregone conclusion. One per cent get acquitted. When the going gets really tough for the State, as in Ireland, they have never hesitated to suspend jury and other kinds of trial, and introduce blanket powers of detention.

At one time juries were severely punished for bringing in verdicts which displeased the Crown,² but this practice ended with *Bushell's* case in 1670. At other times juries were deliberately packed with government supporters.

Again, in Ireland this practice lasted longer than elsewhere. Thus when Parnell and other members of the Irish Land League were sent for trial in 1871 for conspiring to persuade tenants to stop paying rent, the Irish Secretary W.E. Forster was 'assailed . . . by Lord Randolph Churchill for having allowed Mr. Parnell and his co-defendants . . . to be sent before an unpacked jury . . .'.³ The jury was unable to agree on a verdict and Parnell & Co. had to be set free. Soon after they were detained without trial.

Where a jury has returned a verdict hostile to the State, the judges have always been quite ready to overthrow it. Thus in the Parnell case the English judiciary was able to revenge itself several years later, when they ruled that Parnell & Co. had been guilty of conspiracy even though some of the so-called conspirators had never seen each other or even corresponded with each other.⁴

In 1833 the finding of a Coroners' jury was unhesitatingly overturned after they had justified the death of a policeman stabbed when the police had tried to break up a working class meeting in Cold Bath Fields.⁵ Compare this with the police shooting at India House in February 1973.

Judges have control over court procedure and they have never hesitated to use this power to reduce the jury as much as possible to a state of complete passivity. The Coroners' jury in the above stabbing case were active throughout the inquest. They interrogated witnesses, made comments, and agreed with the coroner. Today a jury is told that it can only ask questions if they write them out and ask them through the judge. Even in the selection of juries the State tries to reduce to a minimum the defence's chances of getting rid of those likely to be biased against them. (See *Race Today*, Between

the Lines, December 1973).

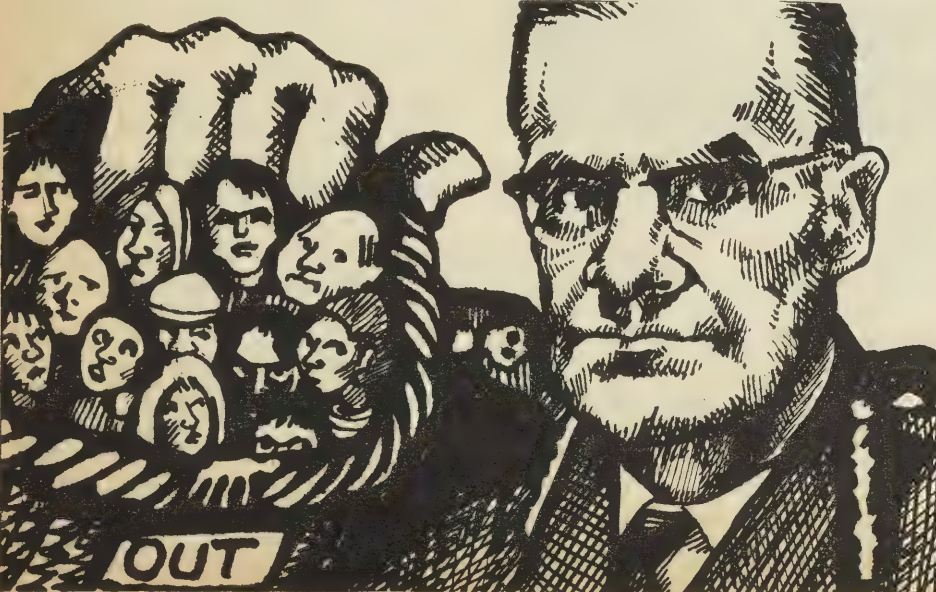
Thus Robert Mark's attack on jury trial follows a continuous and lengthy history of reducing and controlling the jury's power. What is particularly disturbing to him is that despite being fenced in by all these restrictions, juries are still managing to operate independently, and are in fact now acquitting more and more people. In his Richard Dimpleby lecture he says that 50 per cent of those who plead not guilty in the higher courts are acquitted. This shows a leap from 39 per cent in 1965.⁶

Working Class Juries

The acquittal statistics match a changing composition in London and other urban juries. Throughout the sixties these have become more and more working class. This has resulted from rating revaluations, the spread of house ownership among the working class, and the growth of council housing, where each tenant qualifies for jury service. Since 1 January 1973 all those on the voters' register, unless disqualified, can now serve on a jury.

I believe working class juries are more likely to acquit than middle class ones, and that the acquittal statistics bear this out. For within a working class jury both collectively and individually there will be a certain experience of the police, and a certain hostility and distrust borne of that experience. At the same time there will be within the ranks of the jury a certain deference to authority, which the alien structure and procedure of the court and the power of the judge will serve to reinforce. The conflict within the jury (individually and collectively) is whether to follow their working class hostility and inborn distrust of authority or to side with authority and the system. What the defence must do in any case, and what quite instinctively many defendants have been doing, is to counteract the tendencies of the court structure and the judge, by making their resistance to the State's attack on their liberty in an utterly uncompromising way. Where this has been done juries have been responding more and more by acquitting.

In the past *Race Today* and other journals has carried innumerable reports of what the police have done to black people. What should be realised is that the techniques used on black people were learned by the police in dealing with the so-called villains from the white working class. In fact the police have got away with far worse misdeeds against this section of the class than they have ever dared



to do to black people. This is because the police question has been central to all black organisations in Britain from Tiger Bay to Notting Hill and after, and because the levers of black working class power have had to be found in the community, where the police operate, rather than in the factory.⁷

On the other hand because white working class power has existed mainly in the factory and has been placed within the straight jacket of trade union organisation, the so-called villain section of the white working class have been utterly isolated and thrown upon the mercies of the police and gangland bosses. The responsibility for this lies very much with the white Marxist left for whom the re-gaining of social wealth other than through trade union based factory struggles is regarded as irresponsible, undisciplined and unworthy of support. They have, therefore, merely reinforced the official ideology about crime and criminals, which has been used by the State to isolate this section of the class.

However, the black resistance in the courts throughout the sixties, culminating in the Mangrove trial in 1970, has undoubtedly pointed the way. I would maintain that Ince's and other recent confrontations with judges come directly out of the Mangrove experience. The point is that their resistance is finding a response, especially in the London courts, with the kind of working class juries created during the sixties. This is, I believe, the real significance behind the acquittal statistics.

Police and Gangland Bosses

Robert Mark's acquittal figures have provoked considerable criticism, especially from liberal commentators, who hotly dispute the significance of his statistics. I think they are wrong.

However these critics do not dispute the assumptions of Mark about criminals and crime and guilt and innocence. The fact that in the vast majority of crimes sections of the working class are seizing back some of the surplus value stolen from them is never even considered. Ditto the fact that within the so-called criminal fraternity there arises a breed of men who mirror exactly the capital/labour relation. They allow the rank and file to do all the work, and then exact their percentage, and enforce their own particular law of profit by the most vicious forms of torture, by murder, and by betrayal to the police. I refer to the Jack Mansos as portrayed in G.F. Newman's novel *You Nice Bastard*. Newman brings out the conflict between the two groups: 'The felony comprised of two basic types, those who went in for straight villainy, drummers, petermen, blaggers or whatever, and those who were administrators and took percentages off whoever they could find earning.' Mansos was a percentage man:

He shunned straight-villainy; that was a mug's game, especially the way most of them went about things: having it off; getting wicked; going away.

On the other hand, 'Villains doing the actual villainy didn't like splitting their risk earnings with the percentage men . . .'⁸

Newman also makes it clear in this book and his earlier novel *Sir You Bastard* that the capitalists of the underworld, the leaders of the big firms, cannot exist without active police co-operation. That co-operation is paid for in money and in bodies. What is known, however, is that with the stiffer sentences being given by the judges, some villains, who have merely given displeasure to the capitalists of crime are being grassed up and fitted up and are in many cases doing 12, 14, 15 and longer stretches. That is one side of the picture. The other side of it is that the new situation is forcing up the level of resistance in court and in the prisons. That must be very worrying for Sir Robert Mark and the State, especially if they are to retain a viable police force.

From Newman's account it is clear that the leaders of the gangs mediate between the police and villains. This is done within a framework of rules, which provide limits beyond which the gangs cannot go. Thus the kind of gangland street affrays which took place in the fifties would not be tolerated today.⁸ Thus the containment of crime does not proceed à la Dixon of Dock Green, but depends upon the existence of the go-betweens already described, deeply entrenched police corruption, and widespread habits of fitting people up.

If this is the way in which crime is contained, then police corruption is an integral part of the so-called crime prevention and of a democratic police force. Eradicating it can only be done by destroying the police as we know them.

Whither Mark

Either Robert Mark is an idealistic simpleton caught up in the whole liberal

ideology about his own police or he is a hypocrite when he says that every effort is being made to root out corruption in the police. In fact there is plenty to suggest that the efforts taken so far are no more than window-dressing. An officer who resigns quietly saves a great public scandal and a further erosion of the ideology of the good brave honest policeman. Where resignation is not accepted and a case goes to court, there is reason to believe that defending policemen are charged with the charge least damaging to the police reputation. In some cases he is given derisory bail condition and allowed to skip bail and disappear.

Furthermore what corruption has so far come to light has been largely as a result of the increasing resistance to current police methods, and the response of juries to that resistance. If the State's reaction to this resistance is to erode further the right to uninhibited jury trial, so that the police's word becomes the absolute truth, then this will merely result in the complete entrenchment of police corruption. This is the reality behind the Mark rhetoric.

* * *

References

- 1 From *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers*, quoted in J.J. Tobias, *Crime and Industrial Society in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 27.
- 2 As in Throckmorton's case (1554). See D.M. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, p. 97.
- 3 T. W. Reid, *Life of Rt. Hon. W.E. Forster*, Vol. II.
- 4 *R v Parnell*, 14 Cox 508, 515.
- 5 Gavin Thurston, *The Clerkenwell Riot*, p. 142.
- 6 1966 New Law Journal, pp. 928-9.
- 7 See Ian Macdonald, 'The creation of the modern police', *Race Today*, November 1973.
- 8 G.F. Newman, *You Nice Bastard*, p. 93, 68 and 127.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 187.

PUBLICATIONS

Hazel Waters, of the Institute of Race Relations' library staff, comments on a recent pamphlet.

Pulle, Stanislaus. *Police immigrant relations in Ealing*. London, Runnymede Trust for Ealing Community Relations Commission, October, 1973. 88pp. £0.50.

'We are very impartial. You should remember that the ordinary British police officer does not go out of his way to pick on people.'

'The ordinary decent citizen knows that the type of people who come before us are those who have falsely claimed social security payments, those on national assistance, the junkies with their long hair and beards, and those who haven't done a day's honest work.'

— Two J.P.s

Scrupulously documents cases from the Ealing CRC's files of complaints against the police — chosen, with one exception, only from those who were previously biased in favour of the police, and the British legal system. That this is only a handful of such cases, that these have all come from only one borough, that makes the indictment of the police all the more powerful. Far more powerful than the placebos prescribed to remedy the situation. More face-to-face confrontations on the Deedes police model? And how successful has that been? More 'leadership' of the West Indian community — to contain and defuse discontent? Fully independent investigation of complaints? Yes. But this has been mooted for years and never succeeded. Because our controllers need the police force *just the way it is*.

THIRD WORLD

Proclamation of the State of Guiné Bissau

On 24 September 1973 the State of Guiné-Bissau was proclaimed by Aristides Pereira, Secretary General of PAIGC. It is the first black African State to have gained independence by armed struggle. An independence that is '... formed on the basis of the principle that power comes from the people and must serve the people'.

We print below excerpts from the Proclamation of the State of Guiné-Bissau.

The present time in the History of Mankind is marked by the people's struggle towards their complete emancipation from colonialism, imperialism, racism and all other forms of domination and oppression that impede the advancement and dignity of man, peace and progress.

In the liberated areas of Guiné-Bissau, our people, guided by the African Party for the Independence of Guiné and the Cape Verde (PAIGC), under the able direction of its founder and foremost militant, Amílcar Cabral, have built over the last 17 years of political and armed struggle, a new life. They have at their disposal a solid political organisation, an administrative organisation that is in constant evolution, a judicial organisation, a developing economy, social and cultural service, and national armed forces.

The National Popular Assembly, result of the success obtained by the PAIGC in its struggle against Portuguese colonialism, was formed on the basis of the principle that power comes from the people and must serve the people. It is formed by representatives elected by universal suffrage, direct and secret, and expresses the sovereign will of the people of Guiné-Bissau.

Giving voice to the sovereign will of the people, the National Popular Assembly, assembled in the region of Boe on 24 September 1973,

SOLEMNLY PROCLAIMS THE STATE OF GUINÉ-BISSAU.

The State of Guiné-Bissau is a sovereign, republican, democratic, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist state and has as its first objective the total liberation of the people of Guiné-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands, and the union of these two territories for the creation of an African motherland which is strong and which marches towards progress. This union will be achieved by the liberation of the two territories according to the people's wishes.

It is a sacred duty of the state of Guiné-Bissau to act towards the speeding-up, by all possible means, of the expulsion of the aggressive forces of Portuguese colonialism from the parts of Guiné-Bissau they still occupy, and towards the reinforcement of the struggle in the Cape Verde Islands, an integral and inalienable part of the national territory of the people of Guiné-

Bissau and Cape Verde. On the Cape Verde Islands, when the time is right. The National Popular Assembly of Cape Verde will be formed, aimed at the formation of the supreme body of the total sovereignty of our people and of their unified state: the Supreme Assembly of the People of Guiné and Cape Verde.

The State of Guiné-Bissau regards as the basic principles of its external policy the reinforcement of the links of solidarity and combative fraternity of our people with the peoples struggling for freedom and independence in Africa, Asia and Latin America and with all Arab peoples struggling against Zionism.

The State of Guiné-Bissau is an integral part of Africa, and is fighting for the unity of the African peoples, with regard to freedom, dignity, and the right to the political, economic, social and cultural progress of these peoples.

In the field of international relations, the State of Guiné-Bissau wishes to maintain and develop links of friendship, co-operation and solidarity with neighbouring countries — the Republic of Guiné and the Republic of Senegal — with all independent African states and with all the states in the world which recognise its sovereignty and support the national liberation struggles of our people. The international relations of our State are based on the principles of peaceful co-existence, mutual respect for

national sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual advantages.

The State of Guiné-Bissau assumes the responsibility to promote the economic progress of the country, thus laying the material foundations for the development of culture, science and technology with a view to a constant improvement in the standards of the social and economic life of our populations. We want to achieve a life of peace, well-being and progress for all the sons of our country.

With our heroic People's National Liberation Army as a base, the State of Guiné-Bissau will bestow our National Armed Forces with all the necessary means to accomplish the mission of totally liberating our country and of defending the conquests of our people and the integrity of our national territory.

From the historic moment of the proclamation of the State of Guiné-Bissau, the authorities of the organisation of the Portuguese colonial state which may exercise any political, military or administrative power in our territory are declared illegal, and their acts are null and void. Therefore, henceforth the Portuguese State has no right to enter into any agreement or undertaking involving our country. All agreements, conventions, treaties, alliances and concessions signed in the past by the Portuguese colonialists involving our country will be submitted to the Popular Assembly, which will review them in accordance with the interests of our people.

The State of Guiné-Bissau affirms the principle that it is struggling against



Aristides Pereira, Secretary-General of PAIGC, at the first meeting of the National Popular Assembly, September 1973.

Portuguese colonialism and not against the Portuguese people, with whom our people wish to maintain relations of friendship and cordiality.

The State of Guiné-Bissau adheres to the principles of non-alignment. It supports the settling of conflicts among nations by negotiation and in this context, in accordance with the resolutions of the highest international bodies, declares that it is prepared to negotiate a solution to end the aggression of the Portuguese colonial government which illegally occupies part of our national territory and which commits acts of genocide against the population.

The State of Guiné-Bissau appeals to all the independent states of the world to recognize it 'de jure' as a sovereign state, in accordance with international law and practice. It expresses its decision to participate in international affairs, particularly within the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations Organisation, where our people will be able to contribute to the solution of the fundamental problems of our times — those of Africa and those of the world.

THE NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY

Historic Black Summit Conference

Mathew Nkoana

Recent events in South Africa, notably the summit conference in November 1973, of the leaders of seven of the country's eight so-called black homelands, represent an achievement in political unity on a scale which has eluded the black people for sixty years.

So far the absence from the conference of the eighth ethnic community has not been accounted for, but there is no reason to suppose that these too will not fall in line with the rest in the cry for black solidarity which rang out from Umtata in the Transkei, the oldest 'self-governing' Bantustan.

Of even greater historic importance is the call from the summit for a single black nationhood, which deals the first major political blow at apartheid or separate development in the 25 years of National Party rule. Fondly labelled multi-nationalism by the Vorster Government, in reality separate development of the various black ethnic communities, is a grand political strategy to divide and isolate them from each other. This would serve to promote tribalism, entailing the revival of inter-tribal rivalries, and hostility. Separate development or ethnic

grouping of black communities in town and country could have no intelligible meaning other than as an endeavour by the late Dr. Verwoerd and his disciples to build dykes against the flood of a united black movement pressing upon white apartheid defences.

Indeed, for a time during the past two decades it seemed that despair with the fight against apartheid, the crass opportunism on the part of the Bantustan leaders, and others with access to what meagre opportunities exist for self-improvement in the homelands, the vision of an all-embracing African nationhood that had inspired the founders of the now outlawed African National Congress sixty years before might be lost.

White overlordship in South Africa had been helped by the defeats suffered by the tribes fighting separately in their wars of resistance, lasting over a hundred years, as well as by their later political divisions.

The Beginning of the End

At the inaugural convention of the African National Congress in 1912, one of the founders (Pixley ka Izaka Seme) had decried the earlier tribal feuds and animosities which had cost the people defeats in military and political struggles:

These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today In the land of our birth, we are treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The white people of this country have formed . . . a union in which we have no voice in the making of laws and no part in the administration

In the lead then, and for long afterwards, were lawyers and other professional men. But they had brought along to the convention their chiefs and other members of the traditional hierarchies from all over South African and beyond, including the British protectorates. It was an impressive gathering of luminaries. But it was two score years before the ANC became a moderately mass movement.

Today it is the chiefs, reputedly the most reactionary elements in the black society, who are in the forefront of the anti-apartheid fight inside South Africa — created as political leaders paradoxically by an 'anti-black politics' government. Unlike the ANC at its zenith, by which time it had lost chiefly support, the chiefs have widespread links within black society.

Thus the apartheid wheel has turned full circle. In the eyes of all but the rulers, separate development as a solution to South Africa's problems had long been an acknowledged practical impossibility. It founders on the rock of economic realities, though it is nevertheless being pursued in earnest by the men of apartheid.

Driven by the fervour of dogma, with

utter indifference to its colossal implications (a massive social upheaval entailing great human suffering), the rulers have for the last 25 years been trying to dismantle, step by step, what three hundred years' of history have placed beyond reversal. The economic interdependence of the races cannot be disentangled without bringing the country down, without a bloody revolution.

But what emerged at the conference is that it is not only on the practical level that they've floundered, but on the ideological plane too. After 25 years of trying, they have totally failed to convince even those black leaders who reluctantly were prepared to give the plan a chance.

Now, in a loud and clear united voice those leaders have finally rejected the grand design. It is the beginning of the end of an illusion which had been carefully nurtured amongst the white electorate about black Bantustan contentedness, and it is bound to have far-reaching repercussions on the South African political scene.

The most important immediate effect of the chiefs' declaration will be to clear the atmosphere of suspicion which has existed between them and the country's black political organisations, the older and the new, at home and abroad.

The creation of Bantustans has left in its trail a pall of bitterness which has poisoned relationships in the black communities, including broken homes, burnt-out villages, assassinations and other tragedies. There is now a chance for a new leaf to be turned, and real possibilities exist for closing ranks.

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REVIEWS

Island Refuge: Britain and refugees from the Third Reich 1933-9

A.J. Sherman

Paul Elek, London, 1973. £3.80.

The history of the Jews and the persecution that they have suffered over the centuries is a long one but in this particular context is confined to the years from Hitler's assumption of office as Chancellor to the outbreak of World War II. From that moment in January 1933 when National Socialism became a real political force it was clear that a campaign of 'national co-ordination' in Germany was to be ruthlessly followed and that at every level the 'non-Aryan' was to be excluded.

Thus in 1933 itself, measures were adopted to expunge Jews from the Civil Service, from the Bar and later from the other professions. Citizenship law in that year was also brought into effect to denationalise anyone who was considered to be 'undesirable' and this was followed in 1935 by further law dividing the German people into 'Aryans', 'non-Aryans' and 'Mischlinge' (the latter meaning those usually with one or two Jewish grandparents). At the same time confiscation of Jewish assets was undertaken on a large scale and for those wishing to leave the Reich an exorbitant 'flight tax' was introduced.

British reaction to all this was as far as possible to remain silent. The policies of appeasement were to be assiduously followed for several more years and thus no statement was made which might give the Germans cause for feeling that they were being criticised. At the same time Britain's policy towards the refugees, at a time when there was never less than one and a quarter million unemployed, was to maintain that immigration had to be strictly controlled. Britain held the view that it was not possible for the government to grant aid in any way to refugee bodies that were trying to grapple with the problems of those persons, many of whom were penniless, who had been admitted to the U.K.

In fact to a very large extent xenophobia took over and as the author says, 'the spectre of thousands of aliens flooding the job market was consistently invoked by the Beaverbrook and other segments of the popular press'. Even after the 'Kristallnacht' killings and lootings of 9-10 November 1938, when it was quite apparent that the rule of law and order had been temporarily suspended in the interests of a concerted campaign of SS destruction, the *Daily Express* was moved to comment ten days later: 'Every morning we get another account of Jewish pogroms here, there and everywhere . . . We have already accepted our quota of

foreign Jews.'

Another example of the way in which British thought was directed over this situation, was afforded by the 'Anschluss' in Austria which resulted in the Home Secretary of the time making it mandatory for every German and Austrian citizen to have a visa before he came to the U.K. Even as late as April 1939 after a Cabinet Committee on Refugees had been formed and after some streamlining of Home Office procedures had been introduced, the government was still reiterating their view that immigration had to be strictly controlled and that no money was available for refugee groups working in the field.

However this said, on the other side of the equation, it should be pointed out that in addition to the German situation and the further problems which had been created in Austria and later the Sudetenland, there were in the background the governments of Poland and Rumania, both of which had large Jewish populations and both of which had made it clear from 1936 onwards that they would rather be rid of them than have to tolerate them any longer.

Thus the view was taken in London, and not without some reason, that an appearance of liberality over the acceptance of refugees might occasion just the sort of exodus, which would have run into tens of thousands, that the British Government wanted to avoid. Therefore rather than being in a situation which involved only a few recipient nations who were prepared to take some refugees, the plight of the Jews was a typically international matter and one which should have concerned every nation that rigidly opposed the dictates of German Fascists.

But this was not the case. For years as the situation became worse and worse the degree of success in finding havens for the persecuted was almost negligible and this was borne out by the Evian Conference of 1938 which was attended by 200 delegates. This group representing 30 governments expressed deep and sincere sympathy for the plight of the Jews caught in the Nazi trap; but did nothing.

In the final analysis the book is concerned with only the British reaction to events in pre-war Germany and its readiness to admit those who fled the Reich. Upon this point the author, in his closing chapter, describes Britain's attitude as 'comparatively compassionate, even generous' and 'a not unimpressive record'. Britain did during the period of those six years admit 56,000 and although this compares favourably with other nations (the U.S.A. in the same period took 136,000) could it not be argued that we might, bearing in mind the

appalling suffering that was undergone, have been even more generous?

For those, however, concerned only with reading an authoritative account of the history of that time this book is to be highly recommended as an astute piece of research work covering all aspects of those dark and dangerous years.

John Constable

You Better Believe It - Black Verse in English

Edited by Paul Breman

Penguin, London, 1973. 90p.

Paul Breman has been collecting Black poetry since 1948 when he was a teenager. I spoke with him at length about Penguin's new anthology of Black poetry of which he is the editor. The anthology — *You Better Believe It* — is made up of about 200 poems, written by 125 different poets, all of which comes entirely out of Breman's own collection.

His collection arose out of a kind of anthropological curiosity. He explains:

During the last world war, I lived in Holland during the German occupation. We had no English films, no American music; nothing that was American was allowed. After the war we started listening to jazz. Now I am much more interested in text than I am in music as such. So, with a friend, I started to write down the text of Ma Rainey's and Bessy Smith's records, because we wanted to know what the hell this was all about. What got me in doing this was just discovering that the blues text has a sort of poetic discipline, that it has structure, that it is a very formal structure, that it has a number of syllables and it has a rhyming scheme.

This discovery made him wonder whether,

at another educational level, at another environmental level — like an urban level for instance — the same group who had produced this kind of folk-poetry couldn't have produced what we call formal poetry.

Breman had an intuition that Black poetry had to exist: 'I just had this bug that there had to be what was then called Negro Poetry.' From there on his search, and later, research began.

I asked Paul Breman if there were, in his opinion, such a thing as Black poetry, and if so, what makes a poem Black apart from the fact that its author is Black. Paul Breman:

I'm glad you asked me that because this ties in with something I have been trying to do with this anthology . . . because the fact to me that anthologies of Black poetry, or whatever it was, in whatever period we are talking about, seemed to be a sort of inverted racial prejudice, in the sense that there are white anthologies which means that all the authors are white and there are Black anthologies which means that all the

authors are Black; they then tend to have the same sort of poetry inside and it makes you wonder why the hell make a distinction . . . What I am trying to do in this book, which may or may not have worked, is to select poems for it which in some sense could only have been written by a Black author.

A statement like the above, seems to me, a little self-indulgent and at the same time belittling to anthologies like Dudley Randall's *Black Poetry: A Supplement to Anthologies Which Exclude Black Poets*; *Ghetto '68*; Andrew Salkey's *Breaklight*; *Poems from Black Africa* edited by Langston Hughes; and even the Penguin anthology, *Modern Poetry from Africa*. But Paul Breman has tried to avoid this 'inverted racial prejudice' in his Black anthology. The white editor has endeavoured to give us a really *Black* anthology of poetry. And this is not all. Mr. Breman, who has taken it upon himself to decide what constitutes Black, surpasses his white self by saying of Imamu Baraka (formerly Leroi Jones): 'He has never in his life ever written Black poetry. He has never written anything that wasn't Leroi Jones, and Leroi Jones is not particularly Black in any sense that particularly matters.' But in spite of the fact that Imamu Baraka 'has never in his life ever written Black poetry', five of his poems are included in Mr. Breman's anthology of Black poetry. It should be remembered that Imamu Baraka is the poet who wrote:

Come up, black dada
nihilismus. Rape the white girls.
Rape their fathers. Cut the mothers
throats.

And who in his poem *Black Art* declared:

We want a black poem and a black
world.
Let the world be a Black Poem
And let all Black People Speak This
Poem
Silently
or LOUD.

Paul Breman had this to say of Don L. Lee, one of the most powerful of contemporary Black American poets:

His poetry is oral in the sense that all political speeches, most rallying cries, are oral; and they look bloody awful by the time you have them on a printed page. You can still see where it will come over if you do it for an audience which is in tune. Still a lot of it is not particularly good by any standards; his later work, I think, is much better. I think that in his early days Don just wrote and wrote and just went on and on. He never looked at anything again. It is only by the time that he started to quieten down a bit — by that time he didn't have so awfully much to prove to everybody — that he started looking harder at what he wrote. I think that this is partly Gwendolyn Brook's influence. She hammers on technique as well as anything else.

Paul Breman does not think that there are any literary criteria which can be applied to decide whether 'any poem' is good or bad. 'The only criteria I have is simply how do I react to it.' The Penguin

anthology — *You Better Believe It* — largely reflects the editor more than it does the subject, and Breman admits this. Out of a total of 125 poets in this book, 76 are American. The Caribbean and African poets writing in English are not very well represented in this anthology. Breman quite clearly knows more about Black American poetry than he does about Black poetry in general.

The poems in the anthology have no single thematic link. Rather, there are a number of themes. Africa is a preoccupation of a number of poets — both young and old alike — whether it be in the search for a heritage, or simply an expression of concern for the 'Black Mother'. Some of the poems deal with the experience of

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being Black, some with the struggle for freedom, some with the white man, some with the white woman, some with Black life. Others are externalisations of the personal crises of Black individuals.

On another level we find a number of committed poets, like Don L. Lee and Sonia Sanchez, whose poems are culturally 'functional' in the sense that they are therapeutic. This is a characteristic of the younger Black American poets of the sixties. Their lines are Black lines written for Black people. In a sense we can look upon these poets as 'cultural psychologists'. Check Sonia Sanchez:

And i
mean if blk/ fathas proved
they manhood by
fighten the enemy
instead of fucken every available sistuh
and i mean
if we programmed/
loved / each
other in com/mun/al ways
so that no
blk/ person starved
or killed
each other on
a sat/ur/day nite corner.
then may
be it wud all
come down to some
thing else
like REVOLUTION
I mean if.
like. yeh.

The biographical notes on the poets are quite impressive, especially those on the American poets, but could have been 100 per cent better had the editor just

given us the mere facts about the poets. I find his personal comments on Black life, struggle, and culture quite distasteful. He tells us that the marriage between Yolande DuBois and Countee Cullen, which he says was engineered by W.E.B. DuBois (who is Yolande's father) was 'ill-advised'. This may or may not have been the case. But I don't think that it is really any of Mr. Breman's business, and this sort of information seems to be out of place in an anthology of poetry.

You Better Believe It has some very fine and at the same time powerful poems in between 500 and odd pages. It should serve as a very useful reference book for those doing research into Black poetry, and enjoyable reading for lovers of Black poetry. It is a very useful and readable collection of poems, not because of its editor but in spite of him.

Linton Kwesi Johnson

Little Sean always wanted to go to school, and gazed longingly out of the window as his sister set off in the morning. Then one day his mother and sister decided to take him to the nursery, but when they got there, he cried. At first he was only shy, but when it was time to say goodbye, Sean cried again. The kind and comfortably fat, black teacher looked just like his Aunt Hillary, and made him feel welcome and secure. She pointed out that there were lots of nice kids. 'And lots of toys,' said Sean's mother. 'And a swing,' said his sister. 'And a donkey for riding,' said a boy who wanted to be friends.

Sean's confidence was restored and he smiled a teeny weeny smile. He went off to join the other children in a game, and his mother and sister left him at school.

This is a book that will help to meet the urgent need in Britain for books about black and Asian children. The text by a teacher from Surinam is very simple, set in large bold type. The illustrations by a young West Indian are vibrant with colour. *Every young child experiencing his first day at school can relate and identify with Sean.*

My Brother Sean by Petronella Breinburg, illustrated by Errol Lloyd, was published in October. Measures 230 x 165 mm; 32 pages; illustrated in full colour - price £1.20 (ISBN 0 370 02025 1). For further information please please contact Sonia Birth, The Bodley Head Ltd., 9 Bow Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2E 7AL (Tel. 01-836 9081).

AREA ROUND-UP

A monthly non-evaluative account of activity in race relations in all areas of the country. Drawn from the Institute of Race Relations' press cutting service of over 400 national and local newspapers.

Local News

A controversial student debate on immigrant repatriation was called off at **Edinburgh** University when 300 protestors held a sit-in as the meeting was about to start. National Front activities organiser Martin Webster was to have been the main speaker, but was smuggled out 'as the violence erupted'. He described the disturbance as a 'planned criminal conspiracy' (*Liverpool Daily Post* 16/10).

'A separate community'

Malcolm Withnell writes that community leaders in **Preston** are shocked to find that the town has more non-white immigrants than it had bargained for. Cro S M Ahamed said: 'Although most of Preston's immigrants have lived in the area for more than ten years, they have developed as a separate community to a large extent.' He asked the town to appoint more community workers, who, he believes, will be able to encourage minority groups to involve themselves in the community (*Manchester Evening News* 6/11).

Children see differences

Young children choose friends of the same race, colour and background to themselves, according to a survey made in **Bradford** which challenges the view that the young are unaware of racial differences. The survey does not say that the children's awareness of differences amounts to race prejudice - this is arguable - but the children studied, aged between 5 and 13, all realised that there were differences (*Daily Telegraph* 27/10).

First full-time worker

Huddersfield's first full-time community relations worker, Wendell Chapman, has been appointed. 'Coloured people should prepare themselves more for the opportunities that come their way', he says. 'The fault lies on both sides. But coloured people have to overcome the barriers by being persistent and having the will to succeed.' He himself was born on Nevis Island and is a qualified youth leader (*Huddersfield Daily Examiner* 9/11).

'Crash turban'

A **Birmingham** University lecturer has started work on a 'crash turban' for motor-cycling Sikhs. It is designed to meet both

Sikh religious requirements and British safety standards for helmets (*Birmingham Evening Mail* 8/11).

Medical changes

At least 20 per cent of new patients registered at **Birmingham** Children's Hospital are of Asian or Negro descent. Four researchers found that 8.4 per cent of the immigrant children they have studied had abnormalities in their blood which could result in anaemia. A special out-patient clinic had to be established to deal with the heavy workload. The researchers say that the level of immigration in certain areas is resulting in changes in medical practice (*Birmingham Evening Mail* 3/11).

Not the spirit

Voluntary organisations in **Coventry** might be pleased with the news of the Urban Programme money coming to them, but secretary of the Council of Social Service Henry West feels that mostly 'safer' schemes have got the money and that Urban Aid is not being entirely used in the spirit of its concept. This was to help relieve problems of urgent social need and finance new experimental schemes. The main stumbling blocks to its success was the way in which the government let the money be used, and the whole question of cooperation between Coventry's local authority and the voluntary organisations (*Coventry Evening Telegraph* 10/10).

Poppy appeal

Leicester Cllr. Brian Piper, replying to a comment by the city's British Legion organiser, that immigrants played a small part in the recent poppy day appeal, said: 'It is unfortunate that the National Front made so much use of their having members in the British Legion in their election propaganda' (*Leicester Mercury* 13/11).

London

London's population is falling more sharply than expected, Greater London Council deputy leader Iltyd Harrington told members of the Transport & General Workers' Union. He attacked prejudiced attitudes on the immigrant birthrate in recent press reports. He said they painted pictures of 'a London indistinguishable from Port of Spain or Pondicherry'. The fact that the 8 per cent of London's population who are immigrants are not distributed evenly is the result of bad social planning, he claimed, as is the uneven distribution of the indigenous population (*Evening Standard* 13/10).

Community relations course

A course in community relations is being

given by the staff of **Islington** crc at the Holloway Institute. It includes studying the place of immigrant communities in Britain, the problems they face, and the organisations working in the field of race and community relations (*Islington Gazette* 12/10).

Language bank

Camden crc has produced a 'language bank' of interpreters and translators prepared to assist local clinics, schools and voluntary organisations. 73 people are covering 28 languages (*Hampstead & Highgate Express* 12/10).

Registration drive

A campaign to get **West Indians** to register for the next elections has been started in **Brixton** by the South London West Indian Association. Mr R Narayan told a meeting in Lambeth town hall that they must get onto the electoral role if they want to sit on juries and get candidates of their choice into Parliament. A number of local West Indian councillors, JPs and school governors have given their support to the campaign (*Evening Standard* 22/10).

Refugee project

A new 9-month project to help Ugandan Asian refugees in **Wandsworth** has been launched by the local crc. The project, financed by the Resettlement Board, is to concentrate on employment and welfare difficulties (*Clapham & Lambeth News* 9/11).

RRB

A stronger Race Relations Act was urged by Sir Geoffrey Wilson, chairman of the Race Relations Board, at a conference organised by the Bow Group and the National Association of Conservative Graduates (*Daily Telegraph* 12/11).

Not a success story

Far from being seen as a success story, **Liverpool** is sometimes viewed as a warning of what happens when a section of the population does not get a fair deal, Sir Geoffrey said while visiting the Board's new Merseyside office. The view that Liverpool was a successful multi-racial community was an 'example of that familiar pitfall of assuming that no protest means no problems'. He said that the local crc's annual report outlined an employment situation which gave cause for alarm (*Liverpool Echo* 24/10).

Licensee cleared

Mr. Copland, a **Bradford** licensee, was cleared of allegations of discrimination under the Race Relations Act, and the

judge, the *Morning Advertiser*, an LVA and two NFLV officials were handed bouquets by the Federation of Licensed Victuallers' president. 'The LVA was prepared to spend a lot of money in defence of Mr. Copland,' said Mr. Gill, president of the local LVA. The Federation's national president said: 'The judge's decision establishes for the first time that the licensee's right to refuse admission applies to both black and white . . . Racial discrimination is definitely not practised in our Trade' (*Morning Advertiser* 17/11). County Court Judge D.O. McKee said that the case that five Indians were on two separate occasions refused service in the lounge bar of the Upper Globe Hotel on the grounds of their colour had 'not been made out' (*Morning Advertiser* 16/11).

£5.87 damages

The owner of the Royal Court Hotel, near Coventry, who overcharged three Indians for drinks was found guilty of racial discrimination by Judge Sunderland in a reserved judgement at Birmingham County Court. He was ordered to pay £5.87 damages. Mr. Kilpatrick had maintained that he had not discriminated merely on the grounds of colour but that he overcharged all customers who were not properly dressed or misbehaved (*Daily Express* 30/10).

Not discrimination

Working conditions at Courtauld's Harwood Cash factory in Mansfield were unsatisfactory, but were not the result of racial discrimination, according to a Race Relations Board inquiry report. This follows an inquiry by the East Midlands conciliation committee. However, early recognition of the unsatisfactory conditions could have avoided unrest in the factory. Last March, 30 Pakistanis claimed they were being unlawfully discriminated against in terms of hours, pay, prospects, harassment and the dismissal of one of their fellow workers. They claimed they got £27.74 for a 60-hour week on what they said was a segregated shift. The Board's report said that 'this segregation had not come about as a result of deliberate policy but by a gradual process within the company which had resulted in the formation of an all-Pakistani shift' (Evening Post 25/10). Courtauld's are seeking a meeting with the chairman of the Board about the working of the East Midlands conciliation committee, which, they say in a statement, showed 'a lack of understanding of industrial life' (Drapery & Fashion Weekly 2/11).

Education

The number of West Indian children placed in schools for the educationally sub-normal is proportionately four times

greater than the number of non-immigrant children, according to a Department of Education and Science circular. The circular also states that very few children are ever transferred from these schools to normal schools, and that 'bad' English and discipline problems perceived by the teacher may contribute to the West Indian child's over-representation in ESN schools. The Community Relations Commission said that the important question was whether the circular would lead to a reduction in the number of minority group pupils in ESN schools (*Guardian* 9/11).

Appeal refused

Parents of immigrant girls in Peterborough will be prosecuted if they do not send their daughters to school. Education Minister Margaret Thatcher has turned down an appeal they made against a local ruling that the girls must go to a coeducational school (*Peterborough Evening Telegraph* 19/11).

Language needs

The lack of a 'follow-through' in the teaching of English to immigrants could result in serious social repercussions, says York University senior lecturer June Derrick. She is setting up a small unit to research into methods of teaching English and to provide training for teachers with multilingual classes. She says that much excellent work is already being done, but many immigrants later come up against the 'sticking point' beyond which they find it difficult to gain the fluency needed for higher qualifications. 'Very few obtain GCE A levels or university entrance . . . unless we have immigrants coming into the professional classes . . . immigrants may get a permanent low-level view of themselves' (*Yorkshire Post* 17/10).

Change assessment

Many immigrants are put into the lower streams of some Blackburn schools regardless of their intelligence, claims a report by a local teachers' group. This, the report says, reinforces language problems, forcing most immigrant school leavers to take textile jobs. The teachers are calling for new methods of assessing the work and progress of immigrant pupils which would cut through language barriers (Lancashire Evening Telegraph 12/10).

Unsuitable books

London teacher Eileen Robinson is very concerned about the lack of books suitable for immigrant children to read. Writing in the Inner London Education Authority 'Contact' magazine, she said that the response to her pleas to publishers for more multi-racial books, is 'Where do you get the authors? Why not write some yourself?' She states that 'very few members of our own multi-racial society are

producing books about it, or even approaching publishers with any material at all, whatever the quality' (*Fulham Chronicle* 19/10).

Working children

'Many Asian children are being forced to work in sweat shops in East London', because there is no room for them in local schools, claims Tower Hamlets councillor Joe Hunte (*East London Advertiser* 12/10). He says that some children are waiting up to three years for places in secondary schools, and blames the situation on the breakdown in communications. If parents are told one school is full, they do not realise that they can try another or go to the divisional office. He has called on the ILEA for a full-time welfare officer to find and help new immigrants whose children are not in school. He says that the problem mainly concerns children straight from Bangladesh who speak no English. Mr. Hunte said he knew personally of six such cases (*Times Educational Supplement* 26/10).

No places

Almost 200 children of secondary school age have not been allocated a school place, according to Newham's Director of Education Ron Oppenshaw. 137 of these are immigrants. However, he said that the number will be greatly reduced now that he has received returns from local secondary schools, though the children may not be placed in the school nearest their homes (*Stratford Express* 12/10).

'We have failed'

After West Indian teacher Sam Lee was called a 'tame nigger' by his black pupils at Tulse Hill Comprehensive School, South London, he spoke of the way in which black children have become so isolated from authority that they will not even listen to teachers of their own race. He said: 'I try to persuade them that conditions for black people will change slowly by appealing to public opinion. But they think that I am just a lackey of the white system and don't want to listen' (*Evening Standard* 16/10). Taking part in an 'ILEA Now' programme, he said that the black children's disillusionment was so great that it presents a problem of unprecedented magnitude and severity. Teachers must admit this and act upon it. 'We must admit that we have failed' (*Balham & Totting News & Mercury* 26/10).

Not revolutionary

At a conference financed by the ILEA at Eastbourne, boys, parents and staff from Tulse Hill boys' schools in South London held a discussion. A black governor, Mr. Paul Stephenson, told a press conference: 'The school cannot function adequately without a positive relation to the outside

community. It cannot become a fortress of middle-class, white values.' The Education Correspondent writes: 'The head and staff accept that none of the ideas from the conference is revolutionary. The most significant achievements of the weekend, the conference agreed, were the relationships established with the outside world, the reviewing of the school as a whole, and the future prospect of staff, parents and pupils "united in aims and committed to their achievements"' (Guardian 20/11).

Employment

Home Office Minister David Lane, in a written reply to a parliamentary question, said that about 85 per cent of the Ugandan Asian refugees who had been seeking employment now had jobs (*Dorset Evening Echo* 9/11).

Management warned

The Loughborough strike at the Mansfield Hosiery works could be 'the writing on the wall for industrial management', according to a Runnymede Trust report which warns that there is a danger in Britain that certain jobs will become labelled 'coloured', much as others are called 'women's work'. The report says that the choice is not between friction and the absence of friction, but between 'friction now and greater friction later'. The strike was the first in Britain in which inequality of opportunity was the major issue, and management could not afford to sit back and say 'it couldn't happen here'. Equal opportunity was something that employers must positively implement, for their own sakes, to prevent racial tensions developing into open conflict (*South Wales Argus* 19/10).

Just presents

Press shop foreman Henry Green, accused of blackmailing three Asian workers to pay him £1 a week by threatening them with the sack, was cleared by Birmingham Crown Court. He said he had been given cigarettes and money as presents (*Daily Express* 21/11).

'A great advance'

The week-long strike of Turkish workers in London Eating Houses (Wimpy Bars) has ended with a settlement by the management agreeing to substantial advances in wages and conditions, the withdrawal of threatening letters and the reinstatement of sacked workers. Many of the workers had been working between 80 and 100 hours a week without an additional overtime rate. David Turner writes: 'The workers say that as immigrants they are dependent on the firm for the issue of holiday permits so that they can be guaranteed re-entry to the UK after going home for a holiday . . . The new conditions remain considerably

below those of workers in many other industries, but a great advance has been made, and the foundations for future struggle have been laid' (*Morning Star* 7/11).

Housing

After a lengthy debate when words 'racialist' and 'prejudiced' crossed the council chamber, Bedworth Urban Council decided to allocate one house to a Ugandan Asian family. At one point Liberal Alex Harrison suggested that his colleagues were not being honest as it was not because local people were homeless 'that we refuse Ugandan Asians. You don't want "blacks". I don't want them. If we are mocked by the people of Bedworth let us be mocked from honesty'. Chairman Cllr. Tommy Ellis, who disassociated himself from this statement, pointed out: 'We are not asking that the whole community come here, just one. There is no chance of creating a ghetto in Bedworth' (*Evening Tribune* 17/10).

Scandalous allegations

People coming on holiday from the West Indies were sometimes cohabiting with someone and then presenting themselves to Brent council as homeless, said local Tory councillor James Holt when making a demand that the council say 'no' to homeless people seeking guest house accommodation and to give priority to those on the housing waiting list. He claimed that 68 of the 72 people in guest houses were in arrears and were sitting around 'doing as little as possible', and yet were getting priority over those who had been waiting on the housing list 'quietly and patiently'. Housing chairman James Goudie described Holt's remarks as scandalous and irresponsible (*Kilburn Times* 12/10).

Police and Courts

'More black bobbies and encourage your men to learn the more common Asian languages — that's the message the Government is sending to police chiefs throughout the country.' They are among recommendations made by the Select Committee report on police-immigrant relations which a Government White Paper has welcomed as 'a notable and constructive contribution' to race relations (*Evening Post* 17/10). The Paper says: 'There is absolutely no evidence to support suggestions that the great majority of immigrants are anything other than hard-working law-abiding citizens'. It also states that there is an increasing need for policemen to have 'a sophisticated grasp of the nature of modern society'; they need not only to know and enforce the law but 'an adequate understanding of the aspirations and frustrations of the

different sections of the community in which they are to move if they are to establish the mutual trust on which successful policing depends' (*Evening Standard* 17/10). Height requirements should be relaxed to encourage immigrants to join the police force, said Mr. Nasim Hasnie of Huddersfield Pakistan Association. Commenting on the White Paper, he said if the minimum height was reduced to 5' 6", the police would be able to get more Asian recruits (*Huddersfield Daily Examiner* (19/10).

5 new liaison officers

Police-immigrant relations in the West Midlands should be helped by the appointment of five full-time liaison officers. The appointments are expected to come from within the force and will have the rank of sergeant (*Express & Star* 18/10).

Cause for concern

'A major row has blown up between the Metropolitan Police and two race relations organisations over an investigation into alleged police prejudice against immigrants in Ealing. Scotland Yard has taken the rare step of issuing a "detailed rebuttal" of complaints cited in the survey.' Dr. Pule, who conducted the survey, says there is a *prima facie* case against the police on charges of brutality and 'partial conduct' against Ealing's immigrants (*Northamptonshire Evening Telegraph* 1/11). Local cro Mr. Martyn Grubb emphasised the value of the report in that it highlights the type of misunderstandings that occur between police and immigrants. Mr. Dipak Nandy, ex-director of the Runnymede Trust, told a press conference: 'Blanket indiscriminate criticism of the police was not acceptable to us in compiling the report . . . I do not believe anyone who knows Ealing could doubt that there is cause for concern in police-immigrant relations.' Twelve cases of alleged police malpractice were selected from the Ealing crc's dossier of 50 (*Middlesex County Times* 2/11). A police spokesman said: 'The police welcome constructive criticisms in such an important field as police/immigrant relations, but it is not helpful when distorted accounts are produced which give no credit for the strenuous efforts the police have made to improve relations.' (*Middlesex County Times* 2/11).

Police cleared

Labour MP Sidney Bidwell is demanding an independent probe into the case of the 19-year-old Indian who confessed to a crime that never took place. An internal inquiry has cleared two police officers in Ealing of slapping and threatening Satnam Kane until he admitted stealing £50. Home Office Minister Mark Carlisle said in a letter to Mr. Bidwell that the Police Commissioner 'finds himself in some difficulty in understanding how Mr. Kane

came to make a statement of admission of guilt when no money had been stolen' (Sun 29/10).

The use of law

Lambeth barrister Rudy Narayan's allegations that there is racial discrimination in British courts has been challenged by another lawyer, Mr. Leon Britton, in an article in the Conservative Bow Group's *Crossbow* magazine. He accuses Narayan of making 'sweeping generalisations of a wholly unsubstantiated kind' and disagrees with his claim that the task of the forces of law and order 'is seen as keeping the blacks in their place'. Britton writes that it is 'manifest nonsense' that black people are presumed guilty until they prove their innocence. However, he accepts that lawyers and judges are vulnerable to racial prejudice despite being trained to guard against it: 'The courts can only be expected to be a certain degree ahead of society generally. Racial discrimination will only totally disappear when the processes of education and assimilation have gone a great deal further' (*South London Press* 16/10).

Immigration

Home Office Minister David Lane, in answer to a question from MP George Cunningham, said that marriages of con-

venience to evade immigration controls, will be stopped if the number grows. At the moment the situation is being 'carefully' watched (*Daily Telegraph* 9/11).

Increasing delay

The Government has been accused of repeated 'stone walling' over complaints by Rochdale crc at the growing backlog of applications for entry certificates from relatives of Pakistani immigrants in this country. Cro Stanley Hope said that increasing delays at the British embassy in Islamabad were a source of grievance and alienation to Pakistanis here, and were seen by many as politically motivated. Since April he has been unable to get a considered reply to his letters of complaint, written to Mr. Carr but shunted off to the Immigration Department. He quoted a case of a woman who had to wait six months for an interview at the Embassy, and then was told to come back six months later as there were no entry certificates available. Her husband is in Britain (*Guardian* 17/11).

Keep URB

The Government must not carry out its plan to disband the Ugandan Resettlement Board, says Brian Jackson, co-director of the Advisory Centre for Education. It should be renamed the Migration Resettlement Board, be given £3m a year and carry on to ensure that Ugandan Asians

are 'usefully settled into the community, and not simply switched from resettlement camps to job queues, rent rackings and educational problems' in major cities. It should also get ready for the next 'inevitable wave of immigrant refugees' (*Times Educational Supplement* 19/10).

Powell backed

The Powellite line on immigration was strongly backed by John Biffen, 'a Conservative backbencher whose views command widespread respect in the Commons', at a meeting in Taunton. Obviously referring to Powell, he said: 'Those who have alerted the nation to the consequences of the size and concentration of the immigrant communities have been vilified with abuse in the hope that scorn or ostracism could secure their silence.' He accused Parliament of being 'unable or unwilling' to express the deep public concern over immigration' (*Daily Telegraph* 20/10).

Census

1971 census figures, giving the first official statistics of the number of people in Britain of New Commonwealth ethnic origin, show a total of 1,189,300 in a population of 53,802,700. This figure is of people whose parents were both born in the New Commonwealth (*Daily Telegraph* 25/10).

POLITICS AND THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE

Slave Emancipation and the Abolitionist Movement in Britain

Edith F. Hurwitz

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FURTHER READING

Ian Macdonald's article

Bowes, Stuart, *The Police and Civil*

Liberties.

'Bystander', *Law Gazette*, Oct./Nov. 1973.

Chapman, *Sociology and the Stereotype of the Criminal*.

Gregg, Pauline, *Free-born John* (especially chapter 25).

'India House; Justifiable Homicide', *Time Out*, March 23-9, 1973.

Laurie, Peter, *Scotland Yard*.

Mark, Robert, Edwin Stevens Lecture, June 22-9, 1972.

Mark, Robert, 'High Cost of Hanging,' *Police Journal*, 10 October 1965,

Mark, Robert, Richard Dimbleby Lecture, *Guardian, Times*, 7 November 1973.

McCabe, Sarah and Purves, R., *The Jury at Work*.

'Police Supplement,' *Race Today*, December 1973, pp. 331-43.

Reynolds and Judge, *The Night the Police Went on Strike*.

Thurston, Gavin, 'The Clerkenwell Riot,'

in Cornish, *The Jury*.

Zander, Michael, 'Flaws in Prosecution ...' *Guardian*, 17 July 1972.

Selma James' article

Dalla Costa, M. & James, S., *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*, Bristol, 1972.

Du Bois, W.E.B., *Black Reconstruction in America*, London, 1966.

Fleming, S., *The Family Allowance Under Attack*, Bristol, 1973.

Glaberman, M., *Punching Out*, Detroit 1973.

Holtzberg, E., *Stooge: Company and Union v. the Workers of Chesebrough Ponds* (forthcoming).

Howe, D., 'Fighting Back: West Indian Youth and the Police in Notting Hill,' *Race Today*, Vol. 5, No. 11 (Dec. 1973, pp. 333-7).

James, S., *Women, the Unions and Work or what is not to be done*, London 1973.

Lenin, V.I., *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Moscow 1966;

The Right of Nations to Self-Determination, Moscow 1967.

Macdonald, I., 'The Creation of the British Police,' *Race Today*, Vol. 5, No. 11 (Dec. 1973, pp. 331-3).

Marx, K., *Capital*, Vol. I (especially Chapter XIV, 'Division of Labour in Manufacture'), Moscow, 1958, and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (especially 'Theses on Feurbach') London 1965.

Pompeii, G., *Wages for Housework: the Power of Refusal* (forthcoming)

Rawick, G., *From Sundown to Sunup, The Making of the Black Community* (Vol. I, 'The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography'), Westport, Conn. 1972.

Southwick, C. & Michel, L., *In Defence of Feminism: A London Conference Report* (duplicated).

Various documents from the Family Allowance Campaign, including James, S. 'The Family Allowance Campaign: Tactic and Strategy'.

joining the police force. Darcus says it will help but that does not mean that it will change the present system at all.' One thousand times NO! My position stated on several occasions and at the press conference is not simply that it would not help but moreover that it is an attempt by the British state and those responsible for politics, to gloss over the real reason for police attacks on the black community, i.e. to defeat the legitimate rebellion of young blacks in their refusal to do the filthy jobs and to bring them directly under capital's merciless rule.

3. In your final paragraph it is mentioned that I am active in promoting black consciousness. I do not believe that black consciousness is something to be promoted. Quite the opposite. Consciousness — black consciousness — flows directly from the concrete experiences of black people and the development of our own self-activity in breaking out of the stranglehold imposed on us by those who rule and govern.

In replying to the question on militancy, I rejected the definition because by now it has been bandied around to such an extent as to make it meaningless. My precise political position is that of a revolutionary socialist.

I have been quite disturbed and so are my colleagues who were present at the press conference at the serious inaccuracies of the report. However at this stage I would rather accept that these inaccuracies flow from the youthful inexperience of the photographer rather than from any malicious or mischievous reasons.

I enclose a copy of *Race Today* December 1973 which gives you an indication of my general political stand and would refer you to the January issue of *Race Today* where I will be stating the new editorial position of the magazine I now edit.

Darcus Howe,
Editor, *Race Today*

Ethiopian Charity Concert, Sundown Theatre, Edmonton, London N.9.
2.30 p.m. - 10.30 p.m. Sunday November 25.

Westindian World 5p

FRIDAY, 23rd NOVEMBER to 29th NOVEMBER, 1973.

EASTERN CARIBBEAN 25c JAMAICA 12c CANADA 15c

On Monday 5 November *Race Today* called a press conference to introduce its new editor, Darcus Howe, and to present to the press the special issue on 'Black People and The Police'. *West Indian World* sent their representative who later published a report in the paper headlined 'DARCUS HOWE — NEW EDITOR OF RACE TODAY'. The story quoted Howe as 'believing that it would help for black people to join the police force' (among other misunderstandings and inaccuracies). It was the same press conference from which the *Guardian* printed the idea that Howe had been a Community Relations Officer in Newham.

The day the paper appeared, Howe phoned *West Indian World* and registered his dissatisfaction with the editor who agreed to publish a reply in the next issue; Howe also spoke to the reporter, who apologised for the inaccuracies and explained that he was new to the job and inexperienced. Fair enough, but when the next issue of *West Indian World* appeared, there was no sign of Howe's letter.

When we phoned *West Indian World* to enquire what had happened, Editor Arif Ali first of all said that he hadn't printed the reply because of lack of space. Then he developed this to say that he didn't agree with Howe's line, and he thought that if the beatings, etc., were to stop, black people had to join the police force. Further, he wasn't going to give his editorial space to an argument like Howe's, and even if his reporter made a mistake or two, he wasn't going to print the letter to correct it. What *West Indian World* has managed to do is to take Darcus Howe's statement and somehow turn it into *West Indian World*'s own position. The

Guardian printed a correction of its mistake a few days after publication, but it looks as though *West Indian World* isn't going to. For the record, we print Howe's letter below . . .

Sir,

Further to our telephone call on 23 November 1973 I want to deal with the distortions in the article headed: 'Darcus Howe — New Editor of *Race Today*', published 23 November 1973.

1. On the question of 'qualified blacks not getting the jobs they were qualified to do', my response was and has always been that this is not central to the question of employment in the black community. I stressed that the political refusal by young West Indians to enter into the traditional haunts of immigrant labour is a legitimate anti-capitalist struggle and one which *Race Today* unquestionably supports. More than that, the 'equal opportunities' jargon is but a smoke screen to conceal the potential power of those who refuse to do the work that capitalism has marked out for them. This position I have developed at great length in *Race Today*, Vol. 5, No. 11, pages 333-6, December 1973.

2. In reply to your photographer's question on the participation of black people in parliamentary politics through the Labour Party, I stated my political opposition to participation in conventional politics on the parliamentary level and posed the opposite — the destruction of the existing political system through revolutionary activity, coupled with which I added my mortal opposition to black people joining the police force.

I make particular reference to the following: 'The same goes for blacks

Libraries and Racism

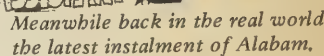
May I comment on your references to the *Assistant Librarian* in your recent feature on 'Books, Libraries and Racism'. It is just not true that we have 'not yet progressed beyond the frame of reference of traditional librarianship'. Anyone who had read the journal over the past three or four years would testify to the fact that we have constantly attempted to relate libraries to the society they serve.

Your writer is particularly severe on the comic strip Alabam. I can see that perhaps this might be misunderstood in the same way as Johnny Speight's Alf Garnett is misunderstood. Alabam is in fact about as racist as her *Guardian* counterpart Varoomshka who, incidentally,

The campaign to keep Commonwealth sugar is treated with very proper scepticism by Leroi Stephens in the November issue of *Race Today*. Any platform uniting the radical/liberal left and the Empire-Loyalist right obviously requires careful investigation.

It would be easy to dismiss as unusually Machiavellian (or simply absurd) an alliance which embraces both Sir Ian Lyle and Mr. Eric Heffer; but we must not reject the actual demands of the campaign just because we reject some of the arguments put forward on its behalf.

The leaflet which you reproduce on page 15 was a nasty document appealing to both greed and xenophobia. Other leaflets used in the campaign descended to simple atavistic frog-bashing including (believe it or not) an emotional reference to the Battle of Waterloo (1815) and even the familiar Fascist slogan: 'British workers first'. I am glad to say, however, that literature produced centrally by the United Cane Sugar Action Committee and the G.M.W.U. revealed a more international outlook on the issue and a direct appeal for solidarity across the seas. I would guarantee that the campaign has already achieved, if nothing else, a large net gain in the general British public's



I suggest that your writer is hypersensitive on this issue and though I can understand why, I do find his approach very destructive. This is a pity for the article puts forward some important arguments and on a constructive note I should like to suggest through your columns a public meeting at which A.A.L. and T.R.J. representatives can discuss the issues understanding of the difficulties faced by cane-dependent Commonwealth economies. And it is quite possible to act on the belief that Third World countries should at least retain an option on sugar-production (even if they eventually decide to use this option as a bargaining-counter in return for something which they value more highly) — without actually believing that the entire fortunes of the human race are inextricably bound up with the continued prosperity of the lorry-owners of Mincing Lane (Tate & Lyle)!

Mr. Stephens makes the important point that cutting cane is a hard and unpleasant occupation. We are not fooled by the periodic photographs of besuited Caribbean ministers wielding machetes any more than we are fooled by the parallel propaganda of besuited British ministers wearing miner's helmets (or even of overalled borough councillors putting in a token hour on the municipal dust-carts). Cane-cutters leave the plantation, as Mr. Stephens argues, 'at the slightest opportunity'. But, as with miners in Britain, 'the slightest opportunity' is not always readily available, and in neither of these two contexts can it seriously be argued that the workers' bargaining position is strengthened if the rest of us work simply to reduce the market for their products.

Every cane-producing country is aware of the need to diversify both its product

We on *Assistant Librarian* who have on the one hand been called part of a Red plot by Peter Simple in the *Daily Telegraph* now find ourselves cast as racists by *Race Today*. When it comes to a choice between Peter Simple and *Race Today* we at least know whose side we are on. I sometimes wonder if you realise who is on yours.

Bob Usherwood,
Editor, *Assistant Librarian*

and its market. None of them would choose to rely on either a monocultural economy or a single trading-partner. Mr. Stephens recognises clearly the unpleasant dilemma of whether Caribbean sugar should 'face the merciless competition of the world market' or continue to seek some kind of concessionary (preferably multilateral) trading arrangement. In accepting that the latter alternative is preferable we must of course emphasise that for true social development to occur, the diversifications of product and market must be accompanied by massive redistribution of both land-holdings and industrial ownership in general.

All monocultural economies seek constantly to diversify. In the meanwhile the folly of keeping all their export eggs in one basket is exceeded only by the folly of smashing that one basket before others are ready to take its place. I therefore accept and welcome nearly all the individual points made in your columns by Mr. Stephens, and would reject only his implied conclusion that cane-production should cease immediately. The entire economic baby must not be thrown out along with the capitalist bathwater. The campaign to keep Commonwealth sugar must continue.

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Contact: Robert C. Good, Dean, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado 80210, USA.

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PUBLICATIONS

A HISTORY OF INDIANS IN GUYANA by Dwarka Nath, M.B.E., F.R. Hist. S. Second revised edition, UK £2.50, USA \$6.50 post free. Obtainable from the Author, 30 Crowther Road, South Norwood, London SE25.

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CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the February issue is Thursday 20 December.

December

5-9

8pm, Wed., 3pm and 8pm, Sun., 4pm and 8pm
Black Feet in the Snow, a musical drama written and directed by Jamal Ali to be held at the Keskidee Centre, Gifford Street, London N1.

8 10am-6pm

South Africa, the Imprisoned Society, a conference on the issue of political prisoners, their significance for South Africa and us and what we can do. Speakers include Ruth First, John Gaetsewe, Trevor Huddleston, Albert Dromo, Revd. Paul Oestreicher, Chairman Bob Wright, and Frank Judd MP, at Central Collegiate Theatre, Gordon Street, London WC1, entrance 50p including documentation. For further details contact Anti-Apartheid Movement, 80 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2DQ.

10 7.30pm

NCCL/Cobden Trust Human Rights Day lecture: *The Experience of the Migrant Worker in Europe* by John Berger, novelist and art critic, at the Collegiate Theatre, University College, 15 Gordon Street, London WC1. Tickets from NCCL, 186 King's Cross Road, London WC1 X 9DE.

11 8pm

Judith Todd speaks on *Rhodesia* at Cole Room, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1, organised by the Young Fabian Group.

12 6pm

Confrontation in South Africa: Church, State and the Individual – conference arising out of the recent trials, to be held at the Africa Centre, King Street, London WC2.

14 7.30 pm

Africa Centre Christmas Entertainment – a supper/dance with dishes from various parts of Africa. Tickets in advance £2 from the Africa Centre.

18 8pm

Douglas Curtis (Founder of PROP and Regional Organiser of NACRO) speaks on *Prison and Prison Reform* at Cole Room, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1, organised by the Young Fabians.

19 - 12 January 7.30pm except Mondays

Anansi and Brer Englishman – a pantomime at the Dark and Light Theatre. Tickets 55p and 66p, children 33p and 44p, special rates for parties from the Dark and Light Theatre, Knatchbull Road, London SE5, tel. 01-274 4070.

January 1974

Conference on Racism to be held by Haringey Trades Council. For further details contact Ed Spring, secretary Haringey Trades Council, 251 St. Anne's Road, London N15.

15 5.45pm onwards

Sangeet Sargham – the Indian Students Association presents the fourth youth talent contest of dance, drama, music and singing with guest artists to be held at Featherstone Secondary school, Western Road, Southall, Middlesex. Application to enter and tickets 30p from 50, High Street, Southall, Middlesex.

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Teachers Workshop on the Caribbean – phone the Africa Centre, 01-836 1973 for further details.

Race Today

FEBRUARY 1974 TEN PENCE

THE BLACK EXPLOSION IN SCHOOLS



The Middle East Conflict
Child Labour in South London
Migrant Workers in Belgium
Fighting Racism in France

LETTERS

Mark My Words

Sir,

I should like to comment on two of the matters mentioned by Ian Macdonald in his excellent article on Sir Robert Mark's recent lecture (*Race Today* January 1974).

Firstly, a disagreement. Ian Macdonald says that the police would never dare to inflict on black people the misdeeds they have practised on the 'so-called villains of the white working class'. I do not believe that this is so. Agreed the police have got away with many crimes against white workers but I don't think it can be said that they drew the line anywhere at all in their attacks on black people.

For example, two members of the Leeds police force drove David Oluwale to his death. Evidence was given at their trial that one of the policemen urinated over their victim as he lay helpless in a shop doorway. David Oluwale was persecuted for many months without respite until these policemen finally drove him to die by drowning. The only kind thing to be said about the police in this tragedy is that the guilty would probably never have been brought to trial had it not been for one young policeman whose sense of outrage was too strong to stomach the vileness surrounding him. His colleagues, including senior officers, who must also have known the facts, chose to remain silent. The police nearly got away with this crime.

One more example — the two Pakistani youths killed at India House in February 1973 by the police Special Patrol Group. Would they have been so promptly slaughtered had they been white?

As a former member of a British police force I know that a large number of my colleagues regarded black people as less than human and treated them accordingly. And in order to determine who sanctions these crimes we can do no better than listen to Inspector Reg Gale, the Chairman of the Police Federation, who said recently: 'It is difficult to argue that we are not agents of the Establishment.' Quite so. Not only difficult but impossible. Inspector Gale also said: 'You cannot blame the police for carrying out their jobs.' Wrong. They can choose not to carry out certain jobs; they cannot avoid the responsibilities of what they choose to do.

Secondly, I agree completely with Ian Macdonald's analysis of the working of juries today. I recently sat on a jury which divided exactly along lines of age and class. The over-30 and professional members were for conviction, younger and working-class for acquittal. Incidentally, this division took place in a case where the evidence of one police witness

flatly contradicted that of his colleague. The defence, naturally, dwelt on this uncommon lapse at some length. However, the judge advised us that it was a matter of no great importance. A strange decision considering that the point at issue was crucial to the prosecution's case.

As Ian Macdonald points out, juries have had a greater degree of working class membership during the past ten years. Nonetheless, due to the various methods of selection and rejection, a large number of juries will still be all white, all male and middle class in their composition. This, together with the present attack on the already reduced power of juries, serves to underline the vital importance of total resistance by defendants to the State's onslaught on their freedom.

Ron Pugh,
53, Heath Gardens,
Twickenham,
Middlesex, TW1 4LY

Sir,

In his article, 'Mark My Words' in last month's *Race Today*, Ian Macdonald writes: 'he [Robert Mark] says that every effort is being made to root out corruption in the police. In fact there is plenty to suggest that the efforts taken so far are no more than window-dressing.' I think the recent figures produced in Parliament on policemen facing disciplinary charges proves Macdonald's point. It seems that fewer policemen will have been disciplined or prosecuted in 1973 than in any year since 1969. The figures produced showed that in the first nine months of 1973 116 policemen were found guilty of disciplinary offences. Projected over the whole year, the figure would be 156—compared with 198 for 1972; 214 for 1971; 160 for 1970 and 137 for 1969.

Only five policemen were dismissed from the force from January to September—projected over the whole year this figure would rise to seven. In 1972 fifteen policemen were dismissed, in 1971 twelve, and eight in 1969. Interestingly, the only

category that compares 'favourably' with the previous years was that of policemen who 'resigned before the completion of a criminal or disciplinary inquiry'. Up to September, 54 policemen had resigned in this way—72 over the year. In 1972 eighty resigned in that way, in 1971 36, in 1970 43 and in 1969 18. So much for Mark's ruthlessness.

Chris Bunyan,
Crouch End,
London, N.8.

Fighting Back

Sir,

I just got around to reading the December issue of *Race Today* which a friend left with me. and having read the article, 'Fighting Back: West Indian Youth and the Police in Notting Hill', I wanted to write to say how much I appreciated it: it's a very good piece of work, and I just hope that the perspective it offers will be seen by many people. I learned something from it, and I'm grateful.

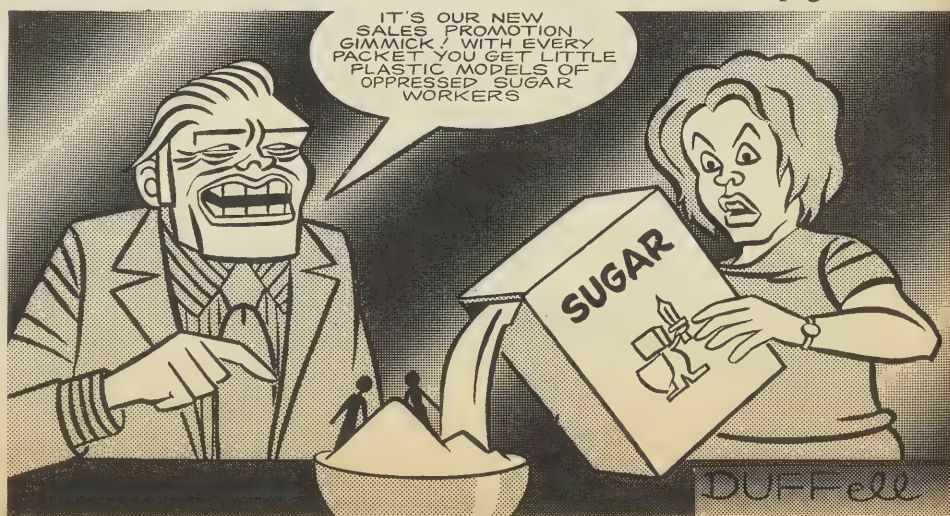
Michael George,
Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc.,
280 Park Avenue,
New York,
NY. 10017

Sugar and the WDM

Sir,

I wish to reply to Leroi Stephens' article on cane sugar farming in the Caribbean, in which he questions the need for the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, and accuses political parties, workers and industrialists of supporting slavery by pressing the EEC to continue imports from the Caribbean. Like most people he is unaware that the Commonwealth Sugar campaign was initiated by the World Development Movement which has no vested interest, except its refusal to accept an EEC that protects its own prosperity by closing the door to imports from developing countries. WDM, rightly or wrongly, enlisted the support of the sugar

Letters continued on page 63



EDITORIAL

The Energy Crisis: New Political Perspectives

As we go to press, our printers inform us they will be on a three day week. What exactly will be the position in Britain by the time they have finished printing is anybody's guess and some people's deepest fears.

On Pages 51-4 we deal with one aspect of what has been termed the 'energy crisis'. The author of 'Middle East Crisis' traces how a tiny minority of the world's population, the Palestinians, who have no direct access to accumulated wealth, have succeeded in paralysing the machines and manpower many miles away. This is certainly the background to our present situation. But in the foreground are the miners in Britain, white and male who have seized this opportunity to press their own claim. It is a wage claim. Wages, we are told is 'only money'. But *The Financial Times*' chronicler and adviser to the ruling class, cannot afford to be so naive: 'The objective fact is that in the process of getting their money they cannot avoid damaging the economy, frustrating the central policy of the Government and seriously undermining, if not actually destroying its ability to govern. They are therefore engaged in political action whether they like it or not'.*Clearly the energy crisis then has been forced on the State because the Palestinians in the Middle East and the miners in Britain have turned their energy into 'unproductive activities'.

In response to the crisis appeals, in the national interest, voiced by our rulers, it seems clear that the general sentiment among workers in the country is: 'This is your crisis not ours.' This feeling rests in the black population to a greater degree than in any other section. Such is our primary contribution to the working class movement and it cannot be underestimated. Added to this, we have been struggling on many fronts: in the factory against a boss, and against the social boss, State Power, in the form of police, courts, prisons, housing authorities and social workers. These struggles we have carried on independent of the white working class: our major difficulty has been our proportion in the population. While engaging the enemy in front, we have had to constantly keep an eye on white workers who have in 1958 indicated that they are well capable of launching physical attacks on us and daily demonstrate deadly forms of racism.

Now it seems they have begun to engage the enemy openly. Black people in Britain can use such a situation to extend their own power. Between them, the Palestinians and the miners, have unburdened many of us of two days of our work week. The question now is whether they will also succeed in lifting from our pockets the wage-equivalent of two days work. The unions of course want the work, we prefer five days pay for three days work.

The identity, morality, concept of citizenship — that is, view of oneself and the world — has rested for the worker in Britain on the 'normal' work week. This took 400 years of British capital to nurture. But what has been normal for the British worker has not been the norm for the 'immigrant'.

The Asian in the Midlands has had a 60-70 hour work week. The West Indian youth has had many a chance to seek his identity in the struggle to work much less. Between these extremes are different gradations which faithfully reflect the divisions within the black community itself.

The three day week has the potential of being the great leveller. What is a crisis of energy at one pole is now clearly a burst of creative energy at the other.

*30 November 1973

Darcus Howe

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Extracts from the Call to the Sixth Pan African Congress

The 20th century is the century of Black Power. It has already been marked by two dynamics. First, a unified conception of all peoples who have been colonized. They are known by friends and enemies as members of the Third World. And the most significant members of the Third World are those who strive for power to the people and Black Power to the Black people. On the other hand, white power which ruled unchallenged for so long during this very century, is marked by unparalleled degeneration, first by two savage and global wars such as the world had never seen. The same mentality prepares for the third war. Its barbarism unpurged. European power strives at all costs to maintain that domination from which the formerly colonial peoples are breaking. That is the world white power seeks to maintain at a time when the colonial peoples have begun one of the greatest movements towards human freedom that the world has ever known. The Sixth Pan African Congress, to be held in the United Republic of Tanzania in June 1974, is part of that movement.

We are proud to be able to call the Sixth Pan African Congress, for the name and the concepts within it demonstrate the continuity of Black struggle. And if we look at the very first Congress we can see the distance that we have travelled. The first Pan African Conference in 1900 appealed to the leaders of the world not to ignore the sufferings of Black people. The British government of Queen Victoria replied 'Her Majesty's government will not overlook the interests and welfare of the native races.' Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois a member of that 1900 Conference wrote 'The Appeal' to the rulers of various countries. But within the Appeal could be heard the silent anger of the Black people. One sentence reads:

In any case the modern world must needs remember that in this age, when the ends of the world are being brought so near together, the millions of Black men in Africa, America and the islands of the sea, not to speak of the myriads elsewhere, are bound to have great influence upon the world in the future by reason of sheer numbers and physical contact.

Beginning immediately after World War I and continuing into the 1920's W.E.B. DuBois convened a series of conferences which were known specifically as Pan African. Such was the famous Congress held at Manchester. Among other principal organizers were Pan Africanists in London, among them George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Ras Makonen, Wallace Johnson, C.L.R. James and Jomo Kenyatta. At that Congress it was unanimously decided that the independence and freedom of Africans could be won only by the action of the great masses of African peoples themselves. In 1945 this seemed to be a rash and

extravagant statement. But in less than twenty years it had proved correct and had initiated one of the greatest political movements that the world has ever known.

As we in 1973, prepare the future, we have to bear in mind where we stood in Manchester in 1945, not yet thirty years ago. At that time the only existing African states were Ethiopia and Liberia. The man who shattered for ever the mould of the old Africa was an African, Kwame Nkrumah. He had formed a decisive association in 1943 with Padmore, and in 1947, after twelve years of absence from his native country of the Gold Coast, Nkrumah returned home. It is said over and over again that after some years of African struggle the British government granted freedom and independence to the people of the Gold Coast. Nothing of the kind happened. That the British government granted anything was an absolute reversal of the truth . . .

. . . Today Africans themselves are taking the road, whether inside or outside of Africa, to solve the problems that threaten to overwhelm human society. The struggles being waged in Guinea-Bissau, in Mozambique, in Angola, in Guinea, demonstrates that today Africans are not seeking mere political independence. Those who are fighting today make no distinction between political independence and complete economic control. Upon this policy, which Africans are carrying out with arms in hand, the Sixth Pan African Congress must draw a line of steel against those, Africans included, who hide behind the slogan and paraphernalia of national independence while allowing finance capital to dominate and direct their economic and social life. This is for Africans everywhere an unalterable principle . . .

. . . Self-reliance. The words means as much to the urban as to the rural African. Self-reliance and independence are directly proportional to our ability as people to utilize modern tools of science and technology for our liberation. If we do not control the means of survival and protection in the context of the twentieth century we will continue to be colonized . . .

. . . We affirm that one of the immediate tasks facing us is the political freedom and self-determination, complete and absolute, of our brothers and sisters in the Southern part of Africa. No names among fighters for freedom stand higher than the names of Sobukwe and Mandela, but these are merely the best-known names of those who fought at Sharpville. The Sixth Pan African Congress must give total support to the fighters who engage the enemies of Africa in day to day struggle.

The Sixth Pan African Congress will

pursue the development of a Pan African Science and Technology Centre. The Centre will be designed to serve the vast array of needs of African people in the scientific and technological fields.

Firstly, the Centre will be an educational exhibition so designed as to attract and instruct the observer to an understanding of the geopolitics of Africa. It will very graphically and simply demonstrate the geopolitical and economic position of Africans in the Americas and the Caribbean. This will be done with large maps, graphs, books, articles and a tour guide adept at explaining the exhibition.

Secondly, the Centre will be a locus for organizing scientific and technological expertise to assist, advise, and develop various projects touching on the human and technical development of African societies.

The Centre will be financed and operated by Africans from all over the world. Its staffing and its teams of experts will be Africans contracted from wherever we are for specific periods of time, to carry out specific tasks, solve particular problems or conduct research in areas of science and technology.

One of the Centre's priorities will be the making available of human, technical and scientific resources to develop a viable and self-supporting agricultural system in Africa. That is to say, Africa must feed itself. And to be relevant, agriculture has to consider every other human endeavour: economics, nutrition, medicine, transportation, communication, education, etc. Embodied in this goal is Pan Africanism.

The Centre must not be viewed as a fixed structure but rather as a living concept among all African people. It is to be so designed as to be relevant to utilizing Black resources for the development of Africa for Africans at home and abroad. It is a move towards self-reliance in the Pan African perspective.

With the growing consciousness that we as a people must struggle to be free, there have emerged among us individuals and groups ready to take the lead in the achievements of Black people in a world culture, which the best minds of today know to be the inescapable future of mankind. When we look at the United States during the twentieth century, no intellectual, no organizer stands higher than W.E. B. DuBois, one of the supreme spirits of our time. We shall bear in mind and propagate the distinguished contributions to modern civilization made by Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah and Mwalimu Nyerere.

Among Africans in the diaspora, we have seen during the last decades remarkable men who show the high quality that is inherent in Africa and in all Africans

today. The Caribbean islands brought forth such luminaries as Edward Elyden, Aime Cesaire (the man of Negritude), George Padmore, who organized Black people politically and is known today as 'The Father of African Emancipation', Frantz Fanon, one of the most honoured political thinkers of the day. With them is also the historian and political activist, C.L.R. James.

From the United States we have some of the most tremendous struggles that have developed in the world since the end of World War II. From events in Montgomery, Alabama to the present day, we have seen unprecedented upheavals in Watts, in Cleveland, in Detroit, in Los Angeles, in Newark, all over the United States, in places known and unknown. And on the same high level as the mass movement, we have seen such people as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Elijah Muhammed, Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, George Jackson, and Imamu Baraka - men who, whatever their political differences, have shown that Black people are now in the very forefront of the political activities of that country. Here is a universal pattern of rejection of Western civilization by Blacks and a successive series of creative contributions to the new society. Malcolm X, George Jackson, Angela Davis, Rap Brown, are more closely associated with the jails of the United States and not the Universities; Nkrumah, Kenyatta, Banda and Lumumba had to be taken out of imperialist jails to govern African peoples otherwise ungovernable by the imperialists.

Our people are moving together towards the achievement of a society where the intellectual or functionary will no longer be dominant, a society in which we shall achieve more of the things which all people through all time have acknowledged to be the legitimate goals of struggles: independence and equality

The Science and Technology Centre

One of the basic goals of the Sixth Pan African Congress is the bringing together of African Scientists and Technologists from all Africa and the Diaspora. It is hoped that as we recognise one another we shall begin to forge realistic ways of imparting our skills for the benefit of Africa and Africans at home and abroad.

In order that the activity be meaningful, the main event - the Science and Technology Centre should have growing significance, relevancy to all Africans, permanency, a learning experience at all various levels for even the most illiterate observer and incorporate all the skills of the Pan African nation.

- (1) The Centre to be located at the University College, Ubungu Campus, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.
- (2) Contributors to be Africans from the diverse areas.
- (3) The Centre to be a clearing house of scientific and technological information, a

resource centre for applied skills, information especially concerned with geography, mineral resources, health delivery, epidemiology, agriculture, geopolitics, economics, etc. in Africa.

(4) The design of the Centre should be fluid and change as necessary. The topographical Research Centre in Chicago, Illinois is to be used as the basic layout model

Some Problems to Overcome

1. One of the key issues in all fields of endeavour is the European mentality of education that we have. It is counter-productive to our urgent needs for it delays and betrays our self-development.
2. Our poverty certainly retards our development: however, we view economics on a European standard and this aborts our progress. The first order of organization is to develop a cadre of serious workers who devote time and energies to developing the ideological framework of the Congress and the Centre.
3. The mistake we are making is to think that development begins with industries. The development of a country is brought about by people not by money. The four prerequisites of development are different: they are (1) People (2) Land (3) Good Policies (4) Good Leadership.
4. Disease patterns in much of African world that are serious could be eradicated or substantially reduced through a concentrated educational attack on utilization of water, disposal of human waste and nutrition. . . .
5. We should begin to organize the technologists into their various disciplines; Physicians, Engineers, Earth Scientists, (ie, Metallurgists, Meteorologists, Geologists, Oceanographers, Cartographers, Astronomers, Botanists) Communication and Transportation experts, etc. Under the discretion of the secretariat we could begin to organize workshops of these groups individually to plan for an agenda for June 1973

River Blindness

The major economic, health and epidemiologic problem of the Upper Volta, the land along the branches of the Upper Volta River, is the disease known as 'RIVER BLINDNESS'

. . . The fact that there is no cure for this dreadful disease, the solution of the problem negates boundaries and offers a challenge for UNITY and the urgent need for scientists, researchers and physicians. For centuries, Africans living in and beyond the Sahara have come to this area to exchange goods. There was a far greater level of interdependence before the exploitation of the European. The needs of African people have not changed; however, the European has successfully directed our dependency towards him, thus he has effectuated economic control and political

control resulting in a divisiveness that completes the cycle of our colonization.

Some Revealing Statistics

The means of using the skills of Black people to provide for our development must be established and alternatives considered. At present General Foods, Shell Oil Co, and Inland Steel reap more benefits from Black scientists than Black people, themselves. The exploitation of every country in Africa is appalling. The value of raw materials taken from most African Countries exceeds the total amount of the collective incomes of the gross national product. For instance, in Gabon, the GNP is estimated at \$ 410 per head which totals \$ 287 million dollars based on a population of 700 million.

Gabon is producing over 9 million tons of oil a year: 950,000 tons of timber, 1,350,000 tons of manganese. These resources are controlled by French, American and West German shareholders and Companies. The imports of Gabon are the finished products made from the raw materials of Gabon. Gabon is exceedingly rich in high-grade iron ore discovered and yet untapped. The forest covers most of Gabon and its exploitable potential has not gone unnoticed by powerful contractors, the sole owners of the heavy machinery and skilled men that are necessary. In Port Gentil, Gabon, one of the largest plywood factories in the world covering 1480 acres produces 2 million square feet of plywood a year.

Summary

- (1) The complete and absolute political freedom and self-determination of the Black People in Southern Africa. (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea, Bissau, Rhodesia, South Africa.)
- (2) The unrelenting opposition to all people, Africans included, who hiding behind the slogan and paraphernalia of national independence, continue to finance capital to dominate and direct their economic and social life!
- (3) To emphasize science and technology in a Pan-African perspective free from the enslavement of the machine, of becoming automatons.
- (4) To promote self-reliance in the Pan African perspective.

THE SIXTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

From June 3 to 13, 1974, representatives of the 600 million people of Africa in the continent and throughout the world will meet for the Sixth Pan African Congress. It will take place at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and will be hosted by the ruling Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).

The emphasis in 1974 will be, as Tanzania's Julius Nyerere put it: 'Where do we go from here?'

BETWEEN THE LINES

ASIAN WORKERS STRUGGLE AGAINST LOCKOUT

A West London textile firm that has grown in ten years from a small cottage industry into the most modern textile plant in Europe has dismissed seventy Asian workers in what the men describe as a "Barrack Square" approach to industrial relations. The men, who are employed by the German firm of Perivale-Gutterman have been locked out since the end of November in a dispute over bonus payments.

Mr. R L Saini was the first Asian worker at the firm. He joined ten years ago, when anti-immigrant feeling was building to a crescendo, and remembers at that time putting in an 84 hour week for 3/6d an hour. At that time, there were only a handful of machines and just 15 workers. Over the years, the firm employed more Asian workers and prospered until a fire in 1969 enabled them to replace the old premises and erect a large modern factory. Just after the fire, when the firm apparently faced financial collapse, the men put in one day a week free on Sundays to "help them get back on their feet again". At the same period, the men also formed a branch of the T&GWU, whose influence grew in a firm which paid very low wage rates and where payment was made up to a living wage by a system of shift allowances and bonus schemes.

In May 1971, management introduced a new system of bonus payments which was related to the collective earnings of workers organised into three productive areas. This, they claimed was to even out the differences in wages earned by different grades of workers. But the men felt that the system had been brought in by work study programmes by management in which they had not been involved despite agreements to that effect. In consequence, they struck until a proper agreement had been worked out.

The dispute was patched up, but in the course of it, the men missed out by £60.00 worth of wages from the annual profit-sharing scheme. The struggle continued throughout 1972 and early 1973 with daily arguments between management and men on what the bonus system meant and how it worked.

At the time of the Indo-Pakistan war, management issued a circular asking the men not to fight amongst themselves. As absolute peace reigned between the men, they took this to be a management attempt to divide and rule on the question of nationality.

In September 1973, the men approached management for a final change in the bonus system so that it would operate both collectively and in a fashion which everyone would understand. But management claimed they didn't have the necessary



Pickets outside the new factory that they built.



Persuading a lorry driver to turn back.



The long arm of the law - "Just doing my job."

financial expertise on the staff, and put in what they called an "interim agreement". To the men's anger, the new recommendations meant that instead of producing 120 drums in an eight hour shift to earn 10p an hour bonus, they would now have to produce 236 drums in the same time. According to shop stewards' chairman Aslam Khan, it effectively meant that they would now need to work a seven day week to earn what they had previously earned in five days. In protest, they started to go slow and work to rule. Four men were then dismissed.

The workers answered this with a one day strike and committed what the management call "acts of industrial sabotage". Finally, they suspended all the workers for three days and "incorporated the new individual bonus scheme into the contract of employment". For all the men who would sign the new contract there was work and wages, the rest could look elsewhere. Not surprisingly, there were few takers for the new contracts, and the men put the pickets on the gates.

Since that time, the company has lost production: it has moved supervisory and office staff into production to join those few workers who stayed on and advertised for more workers in the paper. People who phoned in for jobs were told to come down to

the night shift (thus avoiding the pickets.) A 33-year-old West Indian put in one night's work after answering an advert before Christmas. After working one shift (which he described as being like "working for the Gestapo") he asked for his cards and his money. Despite an official request from the union, the Department of Employment is still sending other workers down to the factory for jobs.

There is strong support from the Asian community in Ealing, Greenford, Wembley and Middlesex where the men live. The Sikh Temple has requested local shops to supply the men with free sugar, flour, oil and essential groceries, while both the Indian Workers' Association and the Pakistani Welfare Association have helped out with a collection. Similar support has come from other factories on the estate, but the three day week and the Christmas period have been used as excuses by other factories and stewards to do nothing.

The official Union policy now is to sue the company for "wrongful dismissal" at the Industrial Relations Court, a tactic with which some of the men disagree. The company in a confidential "Supervisor's Circular" welcomes the plan to sue them, "confident in the knowledge that we have not only acted properly in all respects, but we have shown extraordinary patience in dealing with those employees who were clearly determined to cause as much trouble as possible."

To the men who worked free on Sundays to put the firm back on its feet the passage about "causing as much trouble as possible" comes a bit hard. Management say that under no circumstances will they take back any of the "troublemakers" but they will consider rehiring some of the others who were the better workers. As we went to press, the strike/lock-out was as firm as a rock and the pickets were obviously having an effect on deliveries. And the men had been approached by Naseem Ahmed, the chairman of shop stewards at the Kay Matzeler factory. There, 45 men had been declared redundant and the management were proposing to sack selectively those they didn't like rather than on the old first in/last out principle. Ahmed had come to offer solidarity and to ask for support. In the eyes of the Perivale Gutterman management, the men "treat the union like a religion", by which they mean that the men pay their shop steward more attention than they do their supervisors. Now that joint action is proposed both on the industrial estate, and in the supporting community it looks as though the struggle really has just begun.

Ealing Curfew

Our Ealing correspondent writes:

Ealing magistrates imposed a curfew on five young West Indians who appeared before them on charges of assault and criminal damage, arising out of a fight between West Indian Youths and the police. Adrian Charles, Herbert George, Harold Bruce, Oswald Williams and Maxwell Fletcher were given bail in the sum of up to £500 each with a surety, on condition that they are in their homes by 8 pm every evening.

On 1 November 1973, the Ealing Community Relations Council (in conjunction with Runnymede Trust) published a document, *Police Immigrant Relations in Ealing*, iterating a series of cases of police injustice to the black community. Among the summary of findings the author, Dr. Stanislaus Pulle, wrote that:

1. 'There is a prima facie case against the police on charges of brutality and partial conduct against the immigrant community in Ealing ...'
2. 'Several JP's some of whom purported to voice the feelings of their colleagues on the bench, showed a clear sympathy for the prosecution's case especially where it involved charges of assault or insulting behaviour against the police.'

The publication of the report sent Scotland Yard scurrying to present a lengthy and boring series of rebuttals. Not a word from the JP's until they reinforced the findings of the report by slapping a curfew on five youths who are supposed to be 'innocent until proven guilty'.

fight police
disco he police
Dogs he police
co riot battle

Scotland Yard's response exploded in their faces when police were called to quell a fight amongst the youths at a disco in the High Street, Southall. The very presence of the police created



250 'D' passports were sent to the Home Office by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants of Christmas, in protest against the way U.K. passport holders and their families (particularly Ugandan Asians) are treated by the Home Office and Immigration Authorities.

greater disorder than already existed. The youths turned on the police to give concrete expression to the findings of the Pulle report. The to-ing and fro-ing between the publishers of the Pulle report and Scotland Yard is over. West Indians youths in Ealing have entered the battle now, enjoining their compatriots throughout Britain as being the decisive force in the struggle against police brutality. The police had the last word: 'It was an isolated incident'.

Prisoners Revolt in Trinidad

Prisoners at the Royal Gaol in Port of Spain, Trinidad, have burnt the prison to the ground. It was their New Year present to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

For the past three years, the prisoners have been protesting against the Victorian conditions in the prison. In April 1970 the prison population was augmented by political detainees and some eighty soldiers who had refused to support the Government in its State of Emergency declaration. Troops and Police occupied the prison when the political detainees staged a protest. This was the signal for the regular prison population to intervene.

The strength of the prisoners is drawn from the fact that in general they originate from the unemployed section of the population which is in the forefront of the revolutionary movement in the country. In the last year on two occasions prisoners have staged demonstrations on the roof of the prison. The Government responded by instituting a Prison Reform Commission comprised of Civil Servants and social workers. A series of liberal reforms were recommended: educational opportunities, new buildings etc.

Two weeks previous to the burning, the pro Government Press published reports of the liberal reforms in action. Photographs of a basketball tournament, in which prominent national sportsmen participated, was splashed across the

front pages to give the impression that all was well. It was even suggested that the prisoners were happy with the new arrangements. It took the prisoners fourteen days to smash the well publicised myth. The Government's response has been the setting up of another Commission to investigate the implication for national security.

New Job For Brigadier

Brigadier John Probert, the newly appointed Chief Executive officer for the Local Authority of Salisbury, Rhodesia, is no stranger to Africa. He graduated from a South African university and then went to work in the gold mines before coming to Britain for the second world war. He stayed in the army as a regular and when General Erskine adopted a "get tough" policy to deal with the Land and Freedom Army, he called in Probert and his Royal Engineers to cut the roads through the Aberdare Highlands using forced Kikuyu labour in an attempt to crush the guerrilla movement.



'Telegraph and Argus'

He takes up his Rhodesian post after a thorough grounding in the principles of local government from the obliging councillors of Bradford. At the Army's request, he was invited to spend three weeks in the city, during which time he viewed committees at work and met most of the councillors and executive officers. Not one of Bradford's labour councillors complained about the use of the city's facilities to train the future supremo of the racist local authority of Salisbury.

NOTES

Would readers please note that, commencing with this issue, RACE TODAY will now be published on the second Friday of the month and not the first as has been the case in the past. This is brought about by an imminent change in printers.

We have been asked to point out that the librarian mentioned on Page 301 of the Oct/Nov '73 issue of RACE TODAY who works in the Lewisham library service and has been a Parliamentary candidate for the National Front is not Mr. J. MacN Proctor who is Borough Librarian of Lewisham Commercial Reference Library.

DOCK BRIEF

NOT GUILTY ALL ROUND

Two Trinidadians without previous convictions were acquitted by an all-white jury at the Old Bailey on 18 December 1973 after making serious allegations of corruption and brutality against Drug Squad officers.

Jessie Antoine (aged 50) and her common law husband, Michael Thomas (aged 51), live at 6 Nigel Road, London SE15. Jessie Antoine has been suffering from arthritis of the back for the past 4 years and produced medical evidence to show that she has worn a steel spinal support for that period.

On the afternoon of 24 September, Drug Squad officers stormed into their flat and began ransacking their belongings which were neatly packed and stored for their return to Trinidad. Jessie was alone at the time. Michael Thomas arrived shortly afterwards to witness their belongings strewn all over the place and the fittings damaged.

No drugs were found. It turned out that the warrant was in fact related to a cannabis plant found growing in a common garden. The officers were not content. They wanted to find out from Thomas where he had got his transistor set. He said he had bought it. After calling him a liar, the officers tried to take it away. The brutality commenced. Thomas was thrown to the floor face downwards. One officer held his neck and his hands while another stood on his back. Thomas told the court: 'I thought I would die, I couldn't breathe.' He was then taken bodily and thrown into the police van.

Jessie was thrown down the stairs after being pushed about the room by officers who also trampled on her bed.

The upshot of all this is as follows: Michael Thomas was charged with:

1. Wounding Sgt. David Parkinson with intent to do grievous bodily harm.
 2. Assaulting Sgt. John Grieve, thereby occasioning him actual bodily harm.
- Jessie Antoine was indicted on the count of assaulting Det. Sgt. Peter Barker, occasioning him actual bodily harm, and spent 10 days in Holloway prison on remand.

Len Woodley (barrister at law), representing the defendants, put to the police officers that their story was a tissue of lies. Cross-examining Parkinson, who claimed that he was stabbed with a pair of scissors by Thomas, Woodley put to him that he received the injuries when his head and shoulders went through the window by accident. The other officers' injuries could be explained by the physical tussle over the transistor.

The two sides of the story, mortally opposed to each other, went to the jury that Robert Mark is seeking to abolish.

They found the defendants not guilty.

Race Today spoke to Len Woodley after the hearing who had this to say:

This is yet another example that trial by jury must not be abolished. It is a very disturbing case, which calls for civil action against the five sergeants from the Drug Squad who gave evidence against the couple.

* * *

On 12 December 1973 Shah Manghor Ali, Musharraf Hussein and Gulam Suphani appeared at Wells Street Magistrates Court charged with being in possession of offensive weapons without lawful authority on 16 November 1973. (Suphani was in possession of a piece of wood and a shovel. Hussein and Shah were both in possession of a piece of wood.) The three defendants, who are all from Bangladesh and live in Aldgate, East London, pleaded not guilty.

Police Sergeant Beakes, PC Price and PC Rainbird gave evidence for the prosecution. They stated that on 17 November while patrolling in a van along Commercial Street at about 10.50pm, they were passing Thrawl Street and noticed a group of fifteen to twenty people. They turned back and saw a crowd of Indians or Pakistanis, who were very excited and speaking in Bengali. They drew up at the side of the crowd and noticed that one man was bleeding from a head wound.

PS Beakes said in evidence that he instructed a woman police officer, who was also in the van, to call an ambulance. As the police officers got out of the van, they allege they saw the defendants put pieces of wood and a shovel by the corner of the wall and stand by them.

PS Beakes found he could not converse with the wounded man, but gathered from the crowd that he had been attacked and robbed by two white youths. He asked Suphani to explain why he had the piece of wood and the shovel. Suphani replied: 'Our friend was attacked and robbed. If I am attacked I will use it.' Beakes then told Suphani he was arresting him and claims Suphani then said: 'If someone attacks me I will defend myself with this.' Suphani was taken to Bethnal Green Police station and charged.

PCs Price and Rainbird gave similar accounts of the incident. PC Price stated that when he asked Shah why he was carrying the piece of wood, Shah said: 'I was in home . . . when I heard shouting I went out and saw two white boys running away. I saw my friend bleeding. We got sticks in case they attack . . . I got stick to defend me in case they attack.'

Under cross examination, PS Beakes said that he contacted other mobile

units in the area to try and find the attackers of the injured man. There was no doubt that the man, Abdul Hakim, had been assaulted.

The Defence Solicitor made a no case submission, since it was clear, even on the police evidence, that his clients were carrying the weapons for their defence: they were *defensive* weapons not *offensive* weapons. The magistrate rejected the submission. He had no doubt that the weapons could have been used as offensive weapons, and it was now up to the defence to prove that it was justified.

Gulam Suphani took the stand and gave evidence through an interpreter. He stated that at about 10 pm on 17 November he was at home, sweeping the floor with a brush and shovel, when he heard someone shouting: 'Come and save . . . somebody has been hit with a brick and dragged into an alley.' He ran out of the house taking the shovel, and Shah and Hussein went with him. They ran to the alley and found their uncle helping a man to his feet; the man, who had been beaten and was in a bad condition, said he had been robbed. Suphani said he ran with Shah and Hussein in the direction his uncle was pointing. On the way he picked up a piece of wood for self-protection. With his friends he ran to Thrawl Street where they found a jacket. They stopped there and a small crowd gathered. When the police came they did not ask him any questions, but just put him in the van. They did not seem interested in what had happened to Abdul Hakim, the injured man, or his attackers. They asked him questions in the van. While at the station he was told to sign a statement which he did not understand (as he speaks little English).

Suphani also told of the frequent attacks on Asians living in the area by 'Teddy Boys' - sometimes with knives. Recently two of his uncles from Birmingham had come to visit him and on walking through the flats had been surrounded by Teddy Boys. They managed to escape. A friend of his had also been attacked and robbed.

After Suphani had completed his evidence, the magistrate stated that in his opinion it was justifiable for the defendants to carry the 'weapons'. A hue and cry had started and these men were pursuing people who were dangerous. When the police found them it was soon after the defendants had found the jacket - and they were standing there. It was really a case of whether self-help was justified. All the other defendants and witnesses could do was state more or less the same as Suphani. He therefore dismissed the charges.

NEWS BACKGROUND

'You Have Exploited Us Like Dogs'

After an investigation which took eight months to complete, the Race Relations Board decided that Courtaulds were not practicing discrimination against 30 Asian workers employed in its Harwood Cash Lawn Mills subsidiary. The story of that investigation, and the demoralisation of the black workers which followed has been investigated by RACE TODAY.

With a nice sense of timing, Courtaulds, the massive textile group, announced that it had doubled its profits on the same day that the Government announced its State of Emergency. Since then, Lord Kearton, the chairman of the group, has appeared on television with an impassioned defence of the miners' and railwaymen's action. His TV appearance on the day of Mr. Heath's declaration of the 3-day working week was received with sardonic disbelief in Nottingham, where Courtaulds' new subsidiary, Harwood Cash Yarn Doublers, has recently escaped virtually unscathed from an investigation by the Race Relations Board.

Harwood Cash is a grim uncompromising factory in Mansfield, 14 miles north of Nottingham. Here 300 workers turn out the yarns and textiles that form the basis of Courtaulds' empire. Most of the workers are women, operating the noisy and hot machines on a shift system that gets the most operating time out of the expensive equipment. Management has been happy with this situation, content to use women as a cheaper source of labour while the few skilled jobs outside of the manufacturing process, like fitting and rigging the machines, have been reserved for a handful of male employees.

It was into this working situation that Asian workers began to drift at the end of the sixties. There are an estimated 3,000 Pakistani people in Nottingham, and many of them have moved into the textile industry, often into jobs that had been thought of as 'women's work'. Thus the first Asians taken on at Harwood Cash were signed on as Volkmann operators. The work is noisy, demanding and monotonous: the operator keeps an eye on two dozen bobbins of different coloured thread. As they run out, they have to be replaced by a fresh bobbin. The work is constant and tiring. But if the operator is prepared to put in a 12-hour day, 7 days a week, he can end up with pay of £35 less stoppages. When the average gross pay available in other industries was only £25 per week, it is little wonder that by the beginning of 1973, 10 per cent of the labour force at Harwood Cash was Asian men.

While white workers signed a contract of employment that gave a standard 40-hour working week, the Asians were required to sign for a 60-hour week basic. Many in fact put in a 72-hour or even 80-hour working week. So telling was the pressure that some of them clubbed together for a house in Mansfield and stayed there during the week, only seeing their families in Nottingham on a Sunday. Akram Hussain was one of the earliest operators at Harwood Cash; he worked

there for a year following the foreman's directions to work 6 till 6, 6 days a week, before finally deciding he couldn't take it and left the firm altogether.

Pressure among the men was building up all through 1972 and a number of other disputes in the area involving Asian workers came to light, the most notable being the nationally-publicised strike at Mansfield Hosiery in Loughborough. As that dispute moved to its climax, Akram Hussain came down to the strike committee to tell them of the situation at Harwood Cash and to ask for support. A little earlier, S. Abbas, one of the Asians who had been involved at the Crepe Sizes dispute in 1972 (which had been a major turning point for the Pakistani community's involvement in industrial affairs), had come to work at Harwood Cash. After Hussain's visit to the Loughborough workers, the strike committee offered their support to the Harwood Cash workers.

It was decided to attack the problems at Harwood Cash in two main ways. Firstly, an appeal must be made to the Race Relations Board to investigate the situation. Secondly, the Asians decided to build a union, something which had not been done in the past. They were very clear from the beginning that it was to be a union for all workers - black and white, male and female. Accordingly, Mohammad Zaman (who had joined the factory the previous October, working a 60-hour week for £20.67) and the rest of the Asian workers put in to join the Transport and General Workers Union. At first their work was necessarily secretive: they organised very quietly in the factory.

At the same time, Benny Bunsee (who had been involved with the Mansfield Hosiery dispute) wrote in a personal capacity to John Lyttle, then chief conciliation officer at the Race Relations Board. He had already had contact with him over the Mansfield Hosiery dispute. Amongst the Harwood Cash workers' outstanding grievances he noted: the average working week for Asians was 72 hours, bringing them in just £27, while white workers for a 40-hour week, plus 8 hours overtime, made the same; that white workers were brought in from Nottingham free in company transport, while Asians had to pay 43p return on the bus every day; a number of complaints about racist abuse from company foremen (as Abbas said: 'They just shout "Oy" or "You" - they refuse to learn our names.') He also drew attention to the lack of promotion facilities (the only Asian employed as a beamer, Abdul Aziz, earned less than white workers for the same task); the Asian workers' complaint that they were employed to clean the machines, while other workers went to

eat, though supposedly employed as operators; and the case of the Asian who when he complained, was told that if he didn't like it he could leave. Finally Bunsee enquired about the Asian worker dismissed at 11pm, despite the lack of transport home.

On 17 February 1973, Lyttle wrote back promising an investigation, adding that the previous year the Board had received a complaint about the factory, but the investigation had been dropped at the instigation of the complainant. This was before Courtaulds owned the factory (they bought it in December 1972). Previously it had belonged to the Linney family, an old-established and conservative employer in the area. Although there had been no union in the factory, it was known that management had established a cosy working relationship with the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers in other factories in their group. The 'moderate' stand of the NUHKW was preferred to that of the T&GWU. Courtaulds paid out £950,000 in cash, £1,054,000 in loan stock and 373,000 ordinary shares for Harwood Cash.

In March, the Asian workers took advantage of Courtaulds' obvious embarrassment over the *Guardian's* investigation into the conditions of black workers in their South African factories to draw attention to their own situation. Mohammad Zaman and the 30 Asian workers sent a letter to the management demanding a new deal: a 40-hour week, a new shift allowance, a grant for travelling expenses, and a say in job classification.

Management was able to use the Board's investigation as an excuse not to move. They acknowledged the workers' letter, but said they could do nothing until the Board had reported.

Meanwhile, the work of forming the union went ahead. While the Asians were all keen to join, there was resistance from the white workers - some of it hostility to the black workers, much of it simple apathy and a desire not to be involved in unions. On 12 March, Ray Thorpe, the T&GWU full-timer, had written to the factory asking for negotiating facilities, but Zaman was not convinced that the union was moving as fast as it might. At the end of March the men wrote to Thorpe re-stating their situation, expressing their desire for unity with other workers in the factory, and, with a slight air of exasperation at the slowness of it all, demanding 'where the Union stands on the points that we have enumerated herein, and just what it feels can be done about the whole situation.'

Meanwhile the factory attempted to head off some of the anger by introducing a system which meant that the Asian workers did not work Saturday or Sunday.

But this did not answer any of their original demands.

In an attempt to broaden their struggle through the community, the Asian workers wrote to management for clarification and enclosed a letter signed by representatives of the Indian Workers' Association, the Pakistani Friends League, the West Indian National Association, Labour councillors and the local community relations officer. One of its most telling sentences ran:

It would appear to us that the immigrants' unfamiliarity with his new environment and lack of command of the English language has made it possible for some unscrupulous employers to take advantage of the situation.

By mid-April, 69 white workers had joined the union. Black workers felt that some progress was being made. But their recruiting efforts still met with hostility and suspicion. Some of the Asians were paying as much as £3 a week out of their own wages for dues of workers who said that they would support the union if it was recognised, but would not pay subs until management had granted recognition. In the meantime the management had set up their own 'works council' to deal with such peripheral matters as canteens and ventilation: they suggested that the Asians elect a 'spokesman'. Zaman wrote to the company: 'We are dead set against a divide and rule game being played. This does not in any way conduce to racial harmony and is in fact counter productive.'

By mid-May, despite the set-backs, Ray Thorpe was negotiating with the management. But the Asians were not happy about the handling. One of the stewards Thorpe and management agreed on was David Evans, who they did not feel fully supported the union; another was a Miss Snuyys, who had only started 6 weeks earlier. In their place the men wanted two of the Asians who had played an active role in setting up the union.

As for the Board's investigation, it appeared to the workers to have got bogged down. Two months after the first letter to Lytle, Zaman wrote again:

Although the men realise that some time is needed for the investigations, they hope that you will get on with it speedily. When we wrote to Harwood Cash restating our demands, they wrote back to say that they are awaiting your decision.

But if management was using the Board as a reason for sitting still, they were claiming to the Board's investigators that they offered the Asian workers an alternative shift of 42 hours, and that they paid the same rate as night labourers (£27.68 for 48 hours as against the Asians' standard £27.92 for 60 hours).

At the beginning of June the men wrote again to Lytle. The investigation was now in its fourth month, and they appealed to him to:

expedite the matter since the conditions under which we are working are extremely intolerable ... to a large extent the amelioration of these ... depends upon the pronouncement that the Race Relations Board will make on it ... Please help.

They also made another plea to management. 'Courtaulds made a profit last year of £61 million,' said Zaman. 'A just increase for us would be as peanuts compared to this profit.'



Most of the black workers have left the factory. Women stayed on to do the work.

On 13 June, Mr. Benison replied for the company, saying that they were still in discussion with the Board. On 14 June they offered the men a new contract, based on the 'Government's recommendations' of £1 plus 4 per cent. The men were furious, both with the company for what they saw as a new insult, and with the union for dallying with their claim. After a specially convened meeting, Zaman wrote to Thorpe enclosing a copy of the new contract, asking him to see Benison about it and stating: 'It is becoming quite ridiculous that nothing is done on our behalf.' He also wrote to the company saying that they could see no difference between the new contract and their previous one:

Perhaps you take us for stupid illiterate Pakistanis that you can put anything on paper and as long as it looks nice we will accept it ... All we are asking from Courtaulds' colossal profits is a wee wee bit. After all we work to produce that profit for you.

But among the men a certain bitterness had set in: some had already left the factory to find work elsewhere, others were becoming tired by the length of the struggle. Even Zaman was talking of leaving.

Benny Bunsee wrote to Jack Jones to see if he could speed up the local office. Jones passed the complaint on to the Regional Secretary in Birmingham. He wrote back virtually telling Bunsee to go by the rule book and not over Thorpe's head if he wanted results. Meanwhile, Thorpe had been trying to work out some sort of deal with management, without, the men felt, thorough consultation. Thorpe and

Benison were to meet on 11 July. The men wrote to Benison again, to coincide with the meeting, supporting their claim. The letter detailed past offers, reasserted their demand for a 40-hour work schedule, and finished with an impassioned attack on the company:

We want to make a very simple appeal to you. You have in the past exploited us like dogs. We have worked under conditions that you would not expose your dogs to. We know that people like you ... prize them even more than human beings. Don't you think you should change your scale of values. ... ?

By the end of July the Asian workers were also doubtful about the Board delivering the goods. 'We feel very strongly that the further the dispute is prolonged, so much the more steam is taken out of it', wrote Zaman to Tom Connally at the Board. 'What puzzles us is that as far as we are concerned, the case of discrimination against the management is so strong that we wonder why it takes so long to prove.' To many of the Pakistanis, events were moving too slowly: already a number of them had left. Disheartened by the time the investigations were taking, they took work elsewhere rather than wait for the result.

Eventually, after a number of meetings with management by the Board - from which one of the investigating committee got the impression that Courtaulds themselves had only a hazy idea of what was happening on the shop floor - David Purdie, the Board's local investigating officer wrote to the men on 17 August a pre-pronouncement letter setting out the ults of the months of work. He was later to say that it was the most careful investigation he had ever carried out on behalf of the East Midlands Conciliation Committee.

On 24 October the Board published its report. It ruled that racial discrimination did not cause unsatisfactory working conditions for the Pakistanis. By this time the men had already lost faith in the union and the Board anyway. The leading group of workers had split up: Abbas had taken a job as a cab driver, Zaman was preparing to leave the area.

And Courtaulds? They complained that they had been investigated by a Board 'which seemed to assume that allegations were true until proved otherwise', and sent their vice-chairman along to see the Board's chairman, Sir Geoffrey Wilson for a personal assurance of the impartiality of the investigation.

Between them, the management, the unions and the Board had effectively cooled out and defused the situation. Now there is only a handful of Asian men working at Harwood Cash. They still work long hours and live hard cramped lives in what spare time is left to them. Most of the original workers have left and much of the labour is being done by women again. The union continues with a desultory campaign of sporadic organisation; and the Board's chairman calls for stronger investigatory powers. Disillusioned, disheartened and tired, the men have retired into themselves, beaten, for the time being, by a system that would not allow them to be anything more than dogs.

Child Labour Used In Lambeth Factory While Truanting

Children as young as eleven have been used as cheap labour in a North Lambeth factory. RACE TODAY investigated the situation in association with FREEDOM NEWS.

Ten children aged between eleven and fourteen have been working regularly at a small plastics factory in South London. The children, who include young girls as well as boys, are paid roughly 25p an hour and are employed both on general duties, and as operators of industrial machinery making up clear plastic covers for books, records and record tokens. They have all been playing truant but have not been missed seriously enough during that time for the Inner London Education Authority to do anything about it.

The children, most of them black, work in a converted railway arch at 109, Randall Road in North Lambeth. They leave home at 8.30 every morning and tell their parents they are going to school. Instead, they check in at the factory at nine o'clock: they leave again at one and either spend their lunch-hour at home, or eat in a local cafe. Then at two o'clock, they go back to work and stay there until five. Normally they then go home, but sometimes they return after tea and go back to their machines until nine o'clock at night. They then return home, often exhausted by the day's work, and pretend to their parents that they have been out playing.

The children are supposed to attend local schools. The youngest ones are meant to be at Vauxhall Primary School, and most of the others are supposed to attend Archbishop Temple's School in Lambeth Road. After reorganisation, the school is located on five sites, and this makes it easier for the children to play truant without the Headmaster or teachers knowing. Headmaster Bill Aggett acknowledges that he has a truancy problem: he also believes that "one or two" of his children might be working some of the time they are supposed to be at school and he says that "some firms are not overscrupulous about insurance cards". Aggett points out that the school exercises a great deal of pastoral care, but he feels that there is a limit to what they can do: when the school writes to parents to enquire about absence, it writes in anonymous envelopes and handwrites the address. But he knows that some of the children intercept the letters and write their own replies in their parents' handwriting.

Although the school is legally responsible for the children, and it is Mr. Aggett's duty to initiate investigations through the Educational Welfare Officer ("The Truancy Man") when he feels something is amiss, he alleges that there is sometimes collusion between the children and the parents so that more money can be brought into a poor home.

The ILEA division of Lambeth includes over 48,000 children in 131 schools. To look after these pupils, there are just 25 Welfare Officers.

Inevitably, in an area of acute inner-city stress, all of the EWOs are overburdened with case-work. Yet in the case of the North Lambeth truants, who mostly come from the nearby Mountain House and Tinworth Estate, there has been no serious approach to the persistent truancy. Actual responsibility for the children is confused in a rag-bag of law. The parent has an obligation to send the child to school, the Educational Welfare Officer a statutory obligation to "ensure the regular and punctual attendance of children of school age." The Home Office also has a responsibility for children and so does the Department of Health and Social Security. In practice, much of this is passed back to the local authority, partly through the Employment of Children Act, partly through the Children and Young Persons Act.

Very few firms however, are prosecuted in any one year for serious breaches of the law, although Valor Partridge Ltd of Cradley Heath, Worcs. was fined £650 in April 1973 for employing three thirteen year olds on a power press.

The children who work at 109 Randall Road arches are employed by a Mr. P. Gregory, although it is difficult to establish who is working for whom. The children either say that they are working for "Gregory's" or for "Plastipack", and mail is delivered to the premises under that name. But the businessman who owns the firm registered at Companies House under that name operates from Burgess Hill in Sussex and we are convinced that he has nothing to do with the Randall Road archway premises. Mr. Gregory also does business under the name of "General Trading Services" and he claims that there are eight businesses involved at the premises. When we investigated the firm, we saw five children enter after the lunch break. Two of them were wearing school blazers, and none of them could possibly have been mistaken for school-leavers or apprentices. When we entered the premises shortly afterwards, one of the children was operating a machine with clear plastic running through it, another was carrying a parcel, and a third

was standing by one of the machines. The outside main door is padlocked, and access is only through a small hatch way which makes it difficult for the outsider to see in. It would also make it difficult for anyone inside to get out in a hurry. When we returned at five o'clock, ten children left the premises. From then until six o'clock a number of children came and went from the factory.

Life has not been all roses recently for Mr. Gregory. One of the children's mothers went to the factory recently and pleaded with him not to employ her child: in response he begged her to let him work there until Christmas. And a fourteen year old youth recently had a fist fight with him over a wage dispute. As the children are working without cards and insurance, they are particularly vulnerable if a mishap should occur. But the premises have not been visited by a Factory Inspector while the children have been there. (The Inspectors on average visit a factory once every four years.) As Mr. Crawley, the senior Educational Welfare Officer for the division put it, "We're not a police organisation, we're not able to follow all our children up."

Recently, attention has been drawn to Bengali children working in East London. Inevitably, with a galloping inflation, there will be more pressure on children to truant from school and earn themselves some money. While parents are unable to earn enough to make ends meet, and have to put in long hours or work shifts to get what they do earn, it is likely that the temptation for the child to reject an educational system that has already rejected him will become very strong. ILEA apparently has neither the resources nor the will-power to ensure that the children get an education. And there will always be unscrupulous employers who are happy to soak up labour for a couple of pounds a day and no questions asked when it would cost them at least £40 per week to employ an adult. Such employers should be pursued with the full vigour of what little law there is.



Two o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon, and some of the children wait outside the factory to go back to work. They ring the bell, the small door opens, and they go in to put in another afternoon's work.

The Black Explosion in S

The presence of black children in British Schools has posed a singular set of questions, the answers to which necessarily threaten the system they indict. The black child, his or her performance, behaviour and reaction to the schools, has taught the teachers and administrators a new kind of self consciousness. The lesson is still in progress.

Black children, acting independently of the hopes and aspirations of their fathers and mothers, have caused the British state to think and rethink about how to control them. Various bodies working directly and obliquely for the state have tried to gauge the dimension and nature of the problem. In grappling with the problem these bodies and individuals have created a maze of mystifications. The latest fact finders, the Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations, identifies in their report, their worries about the size of the problem. The report enters the numbers game, criticising the Department of Education and Science, the harvesters of statistics, for using a short measure and adopting a liberal definition of 'immigrant'. The Select Committee is for calling a spade a spade, a paki a paki.

They characterise the problem as the provision of the black child's needs. They ask for more money to accelerate the socialisation of black children. The *Evening Standard*, paraphrasing the report, called the black children in schools a 'time-bomb'. Inaccurately, because above all British schools have recognised that the time is up and the bomb is sizzling.

State Initiatives to Black Rebellion

For a number of years the initiative on the issue lay with the state. The successive governments either didn't foresee the active opposition of black youth and the forms it would assume, or they felt confident that an old process of socialisation would work equally well on new material. They expected that the machine that had processed white labour power and passed it through the sieve of the meritocracy, would do the same for the blacks. It didn't. The black population, in two distinct steps, carried their opposition to the forms and functions of schooling through the cohesion of their communities into the schools.

Capitalism does its homework, and by 1968 vibrations of the problem had resulted in the setting up of the Parliamentary Select Committee. As on other fronts, the action of the new section of the working class began with the coordination of protest. Black parents complained about discrimination and lack of opportunity. What is most remarkable is that this generation of protest died early. The active rebellion of youth in schools seemed to bypass their demands for equality under the law of opportunity and so on. The new generation were doing their own thing. The protest phase of black politics only called attention to the phenomenon, the Labour government and associated agencies went into action to study it.

The Select Committee had five successive briefs. The first was called 'problems of coloured school leavers,' a governmen-

tal guide to home-grown black labour. Then they tackled immigrant and police relations, another inverse tribute to the effectiveness of the young black offender in challenging law and disrupting the order of exploitation. Feeling along the stem of rebellion, they now want to attack it at its institutional roots. The latest brief was schools themselves.

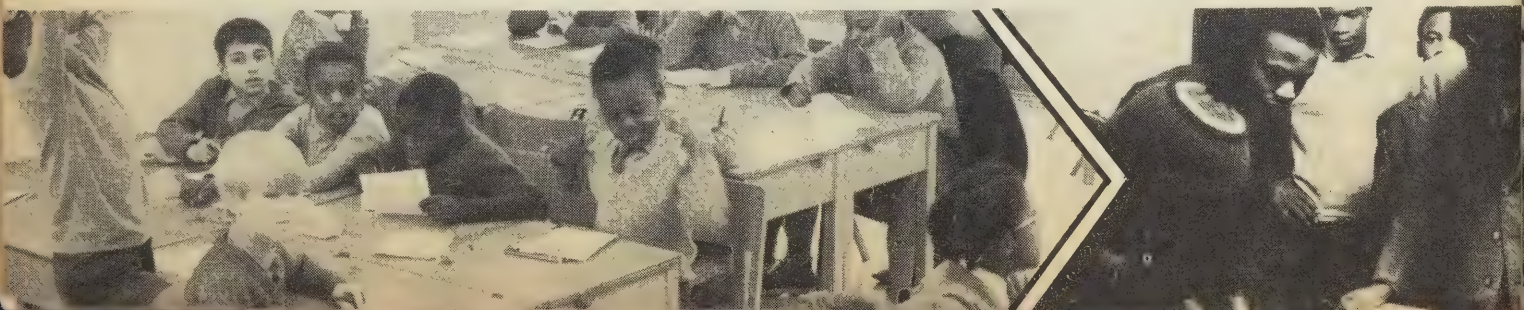
Why does the state see the relationship between itself and young blacks as worthy of so much attention? What does this attention focus on? Three times over the last few years the government has reviewed its policy of 'dispersal' of the black school population. In 1965 the Department of Education and Science instructed schools to keep the black influx to a maximum of a third of their total intake. A fight followed. The directive resulted in black youth being sent to schools some distance away from their homes. The geographical cohesion of the black communities became a political obstacle to the government's intention. In Haringey, the parents fought the decision tooth and nail. 'Bussing' became a British issue, carrying with it all the associations that the fight in America bequeathed.

The DES reversed its decision. Rather than give the black population a chain reaction of issues, schools were advised to accommodate black youth to extended proportions and find other means to integrate them into the working class, to rely on the school system, with its 11+, streaming, exams, etc., to force the black section to find a level in the hierarchy of labour.

The latest report of the Select Committee wants to eschew the crudity of the dispersal method altogether. They recommend providing the schools with enough money and powers to make the 'special' education of immigrants a priority, to teach them standard English, to teach them what a textbook can tell them about 'their culture'.

Why? Principally because without a renewed effort on the part of the schools system, without tipping the balance of forces within the world of school, Britain cannot expect to contain the infectious resistance of black youth. The black child is now classified as several varieties of a special case. West Indian and Asian youth, by and large, do badly in school by the school's standards. It has been amply demonstrated that they do worse than the white working class child with whom they are schooled. They fail tests, they have bad exam attainment levels. The CSEs, O and A levels are not in themselves good indications of relative performance, because within the comprehensive, the black teenager spends longer over them than the white.

The behaviour of black youth in reaction to the discipline machine can be called nothing less than a crisis of schooling. Low streams produce bad behaviour, in black and white, and any comprehensive in the inner cities, which has even a 10 percent intake of black youth, will demonstrate these various



forms of rejection. Who rejects whom? Does the school reject black youth and give them places in low streams, fail them in tests, dissipate their interest in all forms of attainment associated with the classroom? Or does the black child reject what he or she learns of schooling through actual contact with it?

The ESN Battleground

These questions have to be asked because they have been the centre of controversy which cannot be resolved until schools are seen in a particular context. The high percentage of West Indian children in schools for the educationally subnormal (ESN) has become the battle ground of this controversy. The ESN school is the point at which the function of schooling suffers maximum exposure. Bernard Coard, in one of the first serious statements of this exposure, examined the machinery by which black children find themselves classified as subnormal. He offered a critique of it.

The pivot of his argument was justice, and he posed it in terms of the language and culture bias of IQ testing. He was criticising the functionings of the school system rather than its function. Inevitably it led him to believe that the bias could be corrected by fairer testing. His conclusions are not only inconclusive, they are confused. In a later book, with a few words and a few sketches, he offers a little nudge in the direction of this correction by writing a Johnny and Jenny book with black faces and black names, identifying the black Caribbean child as African, and in this way tackling, it must be assumed, a crisis of identity.

Coard's contentions about culture bias and 'middle class' testing in no way explain the situation as it is in the secondary modern schools and in the comprehensives. Undoubtedly the prejudices he exposes do exist in the schemes of testing, but they are not the root cause of the separation of working class children, black and white, into clever and stupid, educable and ineducable.

If we are to be severe, we can say that the whole question of performance is, at best, a symptom of the malaise, at worst, a red herring. The black youth's performance and behaviour in schools is not something produced merely by the content of textbooks or the alienated language of instruction, or the prejudice of the teachers. These are factors, but factors which have operated on white youth for a hundred years, if we recognise that Standard English is not in fact the mode of expression of the working class. Neither is liberal humanism an ideology they instantly identify with (presuming that this is what the 'progressive' school believes, broadly, its philosophy to be). The reaction of black youth to discipline, grading and skilling processes is substantially different and potentially more dangerous to schools. And it is precisely because the education of black youth starts and continues within the communities of which they are still a part.

Eysenck and cronies would have it that poor performance reveals what blacks are genetically capable of. Liberal educationists come closer by saying that poor performance is a product of deprivation - bad housing, hardworked parents, and so on. They mistake strength for weakness.

Undoubtedly the experience within the community influences performance at school, because most of all it influences and determines the will to perform.

The School and the Community

Recently the Inner London Education Authority gave Tulse Hill, a school in south London with an 80+ percentage of blacks, £1,500 to convene a conference in Eastbourne to discuss the problem of black youth in the school. The most useful thing that came out of the conference was the fact that teachers, social workers, headmaster and all couldn't begin to speak about 'within school' without referring to the conditions within the community from which the pupils came. Brixton, the school's catchment area, has the largest population of black unemployed youth in the country. It also has a few labour exchanges offering all comers varieties of jobs in London Transport. Clearly, there aren't very many takers.

The last generation of school leavers, the first substantial wave of the children of workers transplanted from the colonies, has produced similar sets of circumstances in other areas in Britain. The statistics don't tell the whole story, because a large number of black unemployed youth refuse to register with state agencies and support themselves by drawing sustenance and strength from the life of the community. They refuse the work that society allocates to them. School is their most immediate experience of a state institution, if indeed it isn't borstal or jail. Their rejection of work is a rejection of the level to which schools have skilled them as labour power, and when the community feeds that rejection back into the school system, it becomes a rejection of the functions of schooling.

It is this rejection that causes the buyers of labour most anxiety, and it is in this context, that of labour and capital, in which we must set the black experience of schools.

Culture Means Political Identity

In this context, the commodities normally associated with 'education', such as culture, critical awareness, and so on, need to be re-examined. Education is a cultural weapon, the educative process of life in the black community becomes cultural action for freedom. To black people, culture means political freedom. For Asians and for Caribbeans in Britain, cultural identity has been an integrative force in their fight for democratic rights and in the extension of that fight, the assault on the way in which capital uses their labour. Language and tradition determined, to a large extent, the capability of the first generation of immigrants to respond to the organisation at their place of work, and in the meeting places and social institutions of their localities. At the lowest, but indicative level, the smell of cooking that floats into the street in black communities is banteringly referred to as 'culture'. The word also becomes, in certain sub cultures, a euphemism for cannabis. More seriously, the Asians have carried out several successful struggles against managements, against repressive laws and against the reaction within their own unions, using only their



common identity as an organisational force.

The meetings of the Mansfield Hosiery workers in Loughborough (a fight which has passed into history, at least the recent history, of class struggle) were conducted mainly in Gujarati. Several sections of the factory, including Asian women, who made the strike in 1972-73 successful, had nothing to gain materially, immediately, from striking. Their action was based on a suspension of immediate material interests in the service of the whole struggle. Even if they didn't have husbands and brothers on the picket line, they came out as a body of Asian labour in the factory. To an extent they adopted the tried and tested weapons of British working class struggle - they had committees and solidarity committees, they mounted pickets and distributed leaflets. Yet the animating factor was their Asian identity. So strong was this factor that it overcame the regional differences that Gujaratis and Bangla Deshis may have had 'culturally'. Even more, this political identity overcame the differentials of interest that existed among the strikers themselves. That very factor which divided the Asians from the white workers in the factory, who were better paid, classified as skilled and felt themselves threatened by a tremor in these lower orders, was overcome amongst the strikers themselves. They were by no means workers at one level of expectation within the factory. The women are still paid less than the men, there are the less skilled and the more skilled. Yet in taking the decision to hold out for weeks, to make demands on the union, to force the social security shop to pay them, in handling the press, in fending off certain sections of the left who approached them, in speaking to the community relations machine that intervened as pacifier, in defying all the manoeuvres of British capital, they presented a united front.

Some of them spoke no English at all. Their own language created an awkwardness in negotiations, but gave them a lens to their political identity, magnifying their necessity to stick together.

The Power of Language

The language of schools is an oppressive instrument. It does for the black what it has done for the working class white, only more so. It is used as a basis for separating the various levels of skilled and unskilled workers that school produces. The principle is enshrined in the hierarchy of exams, O level English being a stepping stone to the kind of work in which the worker has a greater degree of control over the structure and environment surrounding the job. The more job worthy GCE is set in essays, whereas the CSE works to quite an extent through 'multiple choice' questions in which memory and identification get points and expression counts for less. The ladder of merit, the distinction between the low and lower paid, is one of the principal instruments of division within the working class. Has it not taken years for the unions to even look at the question of women's wages? Will it not take a whole revolutionary situation to get the Ford workers to support the dustmen in any meaningful way?

The culture of blacks, Asian or Caribbean, is capable of opposing this wedge of interests. To put it simply, if a large number of youth in a school speak only Punjabi or Gujarati, it becomes impossible to grade them into clever ones and thick ones. It becomes virtually impossible to treat them as anything but mass workers, produced to share a fate that they resent and defy.

There is little doubt that the second generation of Asian workers will learn more English than their parents. Life will produce the Gujarati cockney, and the school, whose function is to grade and divide, will speed up the process and use it. In one sense it can be seen as progress. We cannot stand in its way, but must spell out its implications. There can be no opposition of power to the intensified teaching of English to Asian children, we can only resist the oppression that this makes possible.

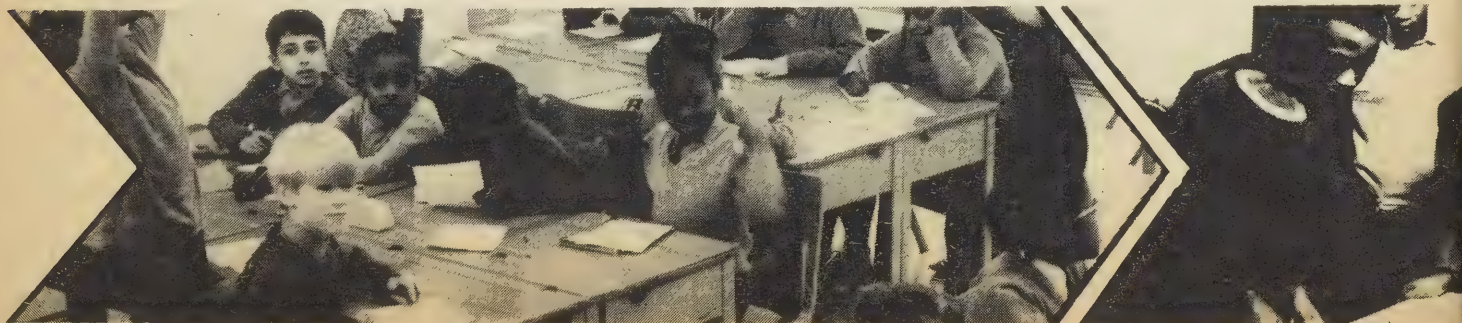
Forced to Fight

When we ask ourselves how this resistance is generated, we look at the relationship between blacks and schools and their educational merchandise. Some of the issues I have already pointed at become a basis for questioning. But questions don't worry a prevailing order. Undoubtedly they agitate certain bees in its bonnet, but questions alone don't sting the body politic. Actions do. Blacks in schools form not so much a fighting force within the working class, but a force which has been forced to fight. Questions and actions together, form for the working class and particular sections of it, notably teachers, certain possibilities of development.

Teachers and teaching have attempted to assimilate the black explosion in the school. The process of assimilation has not been without pain or without painstaking effort. All the jargon of the teaching world went through a sieve of redefinition. 'Motivation', 'relevance', 'pupil's needs', and even 'intelligence', 'ability' and the other clichés demanded re-examination. In reacting against being the agents of racism, certain groups of teachers began to shake off the accusation and in order to do this had to react against the functions of schooling. It is no exaggeration to say that black youth have catalysed the creation of a forward section of teacher militants.

For a hundred years of state education, teachers have been in, broadly speaking, the same objective position. They are workers who sell their labour to produce for the economy skilled and graded and disciplined labour power. The black influx and the move to comprehensivise on a large scale, came into schooling at approximately the same time. The need for cheap labour brought the first, and the need to solve the difficulties of producing all sorts of labour in one plant caused, or allowed, the second. The experience of black youth and the experience of the workers who teach them has been an exposure of the failure of the ideals that liberals act out for the comprehensive school. Both additions to the educational equation tend to teach teachers.

The international black movement fermented a rejection of what black powerists referred to as white culture. The demand for black studies within the English school was a distillate of this ferment. At one stage this demand became formalised and recognised. Schools began introducing courses with that specific name. It was a matter of give and of take - a change in what was dished out to black children as history and as 'relevant' material, and also a change in the attitude towards the response the black child gave. One teacher of English, in a fairly mixed comprehensive (racially), talking about the stories a first year class had written for him, said about the only Jamaican girl in his class: 'She writes in this delightful Creole, I never touch it with my red pen, it seems sacrilege to correct the vivacious flow.' He recognised her right to her



language. But when he was asked if he corrected the spelling, syntax or slang of the 29 working-class white kids in the form: 'Oh yes', he said, 'of course I do', and then: 'Hmmm yes, I see your point.'

Black Studies: A Battle for Minds

In providing black studies, the schools hunted around for materials which were black. The way in which the cultural nationalist phalanx of the black movement had put the demand, enabled the schools to interpret it as African history, a search into the glory that was Africa. Studies gave rise to syllabuses, and the development of these worked towards the discipline of study as schools see it. The impetus that gave rise to black studies, which was an inspiration to know yourself and feel your power, drifted into the formalities of history and geography. Inevitably, this co-optation of the impulse and the demand killed the interest which black youth took in the 'subject'.

The limitations of schools as 'educational' institutions suffered some exposure in the process. Schools saw black studies as a response to the special needs of the black student, and now this very student was saying that he or she didn't need quite that. At Tulse Hill, one of the first projects of its kind, the black studies class became a forum for the critique of problems faced by the black community, and in so doing became a potential political platform. The political answers which the discussions threw up seemed to take the blackness away from black studies. They became working class studies and the potential nuclei for a battle of ideologies — cultural nationalism, Marxism, and the ideologies which would contain these. Hand in hand with the metamorphosis of content, went the problem of who would contain the class, the curriculum, the organisation. Teachers handed it over to a committee of youth. The question of what was relevant passed, though not entirely, into the hands of the pupils.

In this sense, the demands that black studies generated, are political demands. The base of the class pyramid stands firmest. But control of study very rarely passes to the base. Within the black population of large comprehensives, there is already the makings of a sort of black elite. The sixth forms of these schools, through the process of streaming and exams, are endowed with a breed of black pupils ear-marked for this second-rate elitism. They are the good students, the tributes to the system, groomed for A levels, perhaps, and for semi-professional destinies. Through dint of the interest they display, they become the controllers of the black programme. Some of them will move on to university, some to train as teachers themselves, some will go on to be social workers and some will join the race relations industry proper. They aren't co-opted blacks, their socio-political interest is as yet undeclared and so still in the balance. The curriculum of black studies is to an extent a fight for their minds. Clearly the state sees them as the potential uniters of the black section of the population, they have the articulative skills to form the administration of liberal control. The fight for their minds is important, as it is out of this section that the administrative articulacy of the black struggle can also emerge. They are a tiny minority, potential readers of *Race Today*, potential makers of 'Open Door' programmes, and also potential activists in black revolutionary groups.

A few of them will be paid to contain the rest. The state is

already using their imagination to spawn projects for the vast majority who see black studies as just another mind-blow. This majority, by no means silent, is indicative of the failure of schooling to turn out willing workers. For them there are Special Schools of several sorts and capabilities. They have absorbed the energies of the Select Committee of Parliament, they have given rise to special squads of police, special youth officers, even to especially long sentences from the courts of law.

Refusal to Work: A Culture of Resistance

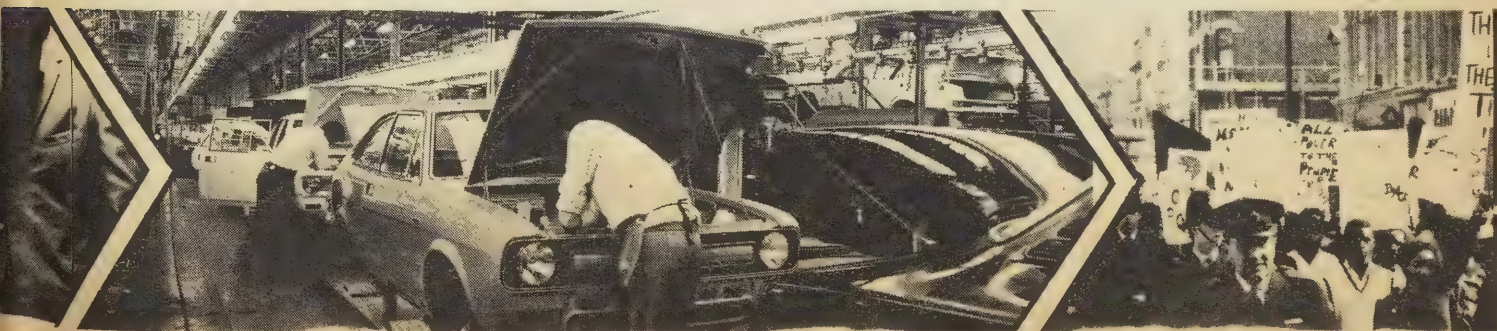
Within the school they are the inveterate imitators of the generation that has just left the schools and is struggling to survive in the community. Their models of ambition don't include the work ethic and this single fact enlivens their reaction to the systems within school. They challenge discipline, study and routine. A few years ago they were, to school, the ration of unskilled mass worker output — a fate they rejected, making the generations in the school continuous with their brothers and sisters who'd just left. Sylvanus and Suzanne in the fourth year, for instance, assume as their models of behaviour Charlie and Donna, who've left school after skulking around the sixth form for two or three years and have had very little employment since, if any at all. They are the breed most dangerous to capital as they refuse to enter the productive partnership under the terms that this society lays down. They have turned the sale of their labour into a sellers' market by refusing to do dirty jobs. Their refusal accounts for the shortage of staff on London Transport, in the hospitals, even on the assembly line.

The infection of this particular brand of class defiance, the refusal to work, spreads to the schools. While the white child asks: 'Will this help me in my job?', or 'Will it get me more wages when I leave school?', the black teenager takes the query to its conclusion by knowing that it won't do either. School has not succeeded in inspiring them with ambitions they know they will not be allowed to fulfill.

Their ambition can be characterised as survival — in some cases stylish survival — without a wage. They carry this ambition as others would a badge of courage. They refuse to work as their parents' generation did. They need very little convincing about the slavery of that process, they are the children of it. Their culture is a day to day affair, an affair of the styles and fashions they collectively generate. They educate themselves within the community, and carry their community into the school where one may see them gathered around reggae, developing the social image of their groups. It is futile for a black studies course to attempt to encapsulate their culture.

Its only text is survival, and it is bound by a rejection of the disciplines of work that the society offers them, and can therefore be called a culture of resistance. It is a culture antithetical to the idea of schooling, and so finally unco-optable.

It is possible for them to force the dissociation between being productive and having rights within school. When they leave school they carry the dissociation with them into the life of the community. The counterpart to their material struggle there is a material struggle inside the institutions of compulsory schooling. The apprentices to the refusal to work demonstrate their demand for a wage for their enforced apprenticeship.



BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to last month's article on 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power'.

Dear Race Today

The great thing about Selma James' pamphlets and her article in last month's *Race Today* is that they ask the essential questions - what makes up the particular political and social power of black workers and of women? What is their relation to capitalist production? How do we organise given the immediate conflict of interests between them and the white male working class? What are the connections between the black and the women's movement, and what implications does this have for both struggles? To disagree with some of the answers she gives is not just for the sake of argument, but because the forms of struggle that arise from them may not be the most effective at this time.

Selma rightly attacks the myth that women's work in the home is just a personal service with no connection to capitalist production. She points out that a 'housewife' both produces labour power and services it. But one difficulty in analysing this role in production is that the result of the woman's work is not a commodity whose value can be measured, but a person, with whom she has a very different relationship from the worker's alienation from the product he or she produces.

So to talk of a 'wage' for this work gives a misleading illusion of power. The power of a labourer is precisely that he can withdraw his or her labour. Selma says that a wage for housework opens 'the possibility of refusing forced labour.... in the home itself'. But there is a difference between housework and childcare. Women can, and do, withdraw their domestic and sexual services from their men. But the point is that the majority of women don't express 'the day-to-day rebellion in the home', and they won't easily be drawn into a movement which they could see as asking them to go on strike against the interests of their kids. This especially affects black women, many of whom are unsupported mothers.

Surely what we should be demanding is more socialised forms of childcare and domestic work, not paying people to stay in the isolation of their own homes; we should be insisting on men and women sharing this work, not justifying the 'women's place' by giving her the money to stay there.

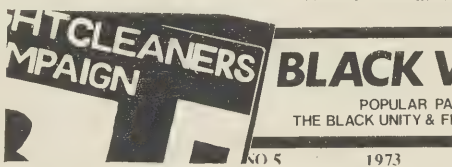
It might well suit the purposes of capitalism in a period of unemployment to do just that. But, if so, who will pay

for it? 'The State', says Selma - which means higher taxes on worker's wages, not on profits. It's true that you could see this as a way of redistributing income from men to women through the taxation system. But over one-third of the labour force is made up of women.

There's another way of looking at the demand for 'Wages for Housework', not as an immediate demand around which to organise, but as a useful means of changing people's consciousness by challenging their assumptions. This isn't just a question of 'seeking to convince' men or whites of the rights of those they oppress, but of politicising both the groups themselves, and the organisations which have so blatantly failed them in the past. For in spite of this failure, the tradition and gains of the organised labour movement can't be ignored at this moment. Selma writes that the wage-rises negotiated by the Unions are cancelled out 'either through inflation or through more intense exploitation (often in the form of productivity deals) which more than pays the capitalist back for the rise'. But one of the chief reasons for the present crisis in British capitalism is that wage demands over the past few years have so successfully bitten into profit margins. The majority of these demands have been made by official union action, albeit forced on compromising leaders from below.

An economic crisis without political consciousness does not make a revolutionary situation, without which no true liberation can be achieved. In the political practice of the left, women are constantly put down; much of the theory interprets the black and the women's movements as secondary both to the goals and to the course of the struggle. But this must be challenged from within, as well as from the external strength of autonomous movements.

Hermione Harris



Dear Race Today

For a short article, Selma James' 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power', is a perceptive piece. The sooner the analysis is expanded into the pamphlet form the better. I would like to make some comments.

1. Nationalism and Class. Selma James has developed a very clear alternative analysis to the two stock analyses that have emerged in the last decade in North America and Europe. For it is as different from the slavish Third Worldism, to which Maoist groups from the student movement have succumbed, around the world, as it is different from the sectarian anti-nationalism of the other wing that flew from the

'The Black Explosion in Schools by Farrukh Dhondy will be the subject of next month's Backlash.

student movement, represented in the U.S. by Progressive Labour and by traditional Trotskyism internationally. Up to now there has been either an idolatry of national liberation movements or a complete rejection of their role.

If the present crises teach us anything it must be the dialectical relationship between Arab movements of national liberation (and thus others) and the working class movements in advanced capitalist countries. This is particularly clear in Britain where the two crises co-exist, that is, the 'oil' crisis and the crisis caused by class militancy over the past few years. Together they have combined to produce a 'ruling class crisis' whereby Heath is attempting to politically manage the crisis to split the working class movement and to make it pay.

Thus, organisations like the P.L.O., which although basically 'nationalist', head mass proletarian movements and have been very influential in developing the present oil crisis, with all that it means for the class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries. Whereas, whenever these movements have won power alone they have been condemned to build state capitalist regimes based on an extreme militarisation of labour, when combined with a working class attack on capital in the 'metropolitan' countries, their real revolutionary content emerges. With both movements attacking, one can actually see how the international socialist revolution will develop, how the national liberation movements of the Third World will transform and be transformed by the workers' movements, e.g., in Britain.

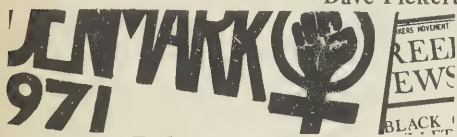
The question of the new International will be solved by the socialist sects as they set up their own 'internationals'. It has, however, been posed by recent events, and by the massive migration of workers in the last 50 years. Immigrant workers are in a real sense the only international that presently exists. It is their struggle that points the way. And they are international because, as Selma points out, capital is international and has an international plan for the working class.

2. The question of a politics of sexuality; Selma did not address this question directly. Yet there is a striking need for the development of a revolutionary politics of sexuality. It is something that I hope Selma includes in her pamphlet. The question that Reich and others posed 30 years ago must be taken up today in a practical and organisational way, not just in a theoretical sense. And in many ways the autonomous women's movement is the only movement in the position to begin this work.

3. The question of revolutionary

organisation; those organisations in Britain that want to see the autonomous development of the class struggle in different sectors and also the unification of those struggles as they develop, have only the most minimal level of communication and exchange. They must begin to work together much more if they are to indeed help in *building* the struggle, as opposed to the vanguard groups that concentrate on recruitment and flag-waving. The time for do-your-own thingism disguised as autonomy, is over. The 'crisis' has ended that. It's now a luxury we cannot afford.

Dave Fickert



Dear Race Today

From Her commitment to the Women's Movement and the Black Movement Selma has consistently tried to formulate a Marxist understanding of the oppression of women and black people and from that a strategic direction which gives us a crucial role in any revolutionary programme.

In doing this the basic category of her analysis is the division of the working class into the waged and unwaged. She sees this fragmentation as arising from the hierarchy of labour powers and a corresponding scale of wages which capitalist manufacture necessarily creates. She argues that these divisions amongst the working class become reified in a cluster of cultural and social roles which are seen as necessary states, e.g., black people are only fit to plant tea, women are only fit to have babies. However, the strategic way forward is not for these castes, in this case women and blacks, to dissolve themselves in a false category - 'the Working Class' - but to recognise themselves as castes and to struggle against the hierarchy of labour and wages which has produced them. This is the meaning of black liberation, it is the meaning of women's liberation. This is the necessary redefinition of class. Seductive though this analysis is I disagree with it for the following reasons.

1. Although Selma rails against the white Trade Union movement she only uses one category of Marxist analysis, and that in an historical sense, to analyse the complex totality of sexual and racist oppression. This category of the international division of labour and the hierarchy of wages, whilst useful, concentrates attention only on the causes of racial and sexual oppression which spring directly from the point of production. If the problem is posed solely in terms of wage differentials then you can say, change the differentials and you've got a revolution. I think that the argument is one dimensional and leads to a one-sided strategy.

In relation to women I particularly feel it fails to give enough importance to the role of women in reproducing labour

power and the way in which this role has been historically shaped during different periods of capitalism. Selma does say herself (page 14) that it is because it is the historical role of women to reproduce labour power that they come to be seen as sexual objects, useable feasts, so to speak, for men, but because she has a primarily economic analysis she sees this as soluble by the wage, when at the very least one would expect her to endorse what has always been the prime achievement of the women's movement the fight against sexism. Paradoxically I feel Selma as a feminist often forgets her feminism.

In a similar way, I feel that for the black movement she may underestimate the constant need for the ideological struggle against racism. Also, although knowing comparatively little about the black movement, I think it would be difficult to work out any understanding or strategy on wage differentials between the Third World and western capitalism and between black and white, within western capitalism, except in the context of an historical analysis of monopoly imperialism.

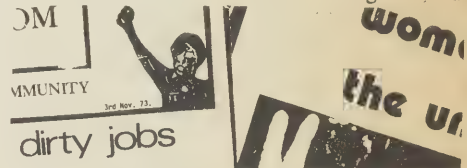
2. I think this one dimensional analysis leads to a destructive sectarianism. To take Selma's apparent diversion on children. Capitalism didn't steal children from a golden age of productivity in the community and lock them behind desks. Capitalism tried to lock them down mines, in front of unguarded machinery, and in doing so killed and maimed thousands. The demand for education for children was fought by many millions of white working class men and women. The demand was won, partially, by the class, against bitter opposition. Granted that in acceding to these, demands capitalism attempts to create new structures to ensure its hegemony, but it did so at the price of higher and higher levels of contradiction. For instance, the demand for and control of education for all people is still crucial to the struggle of the class, e.g., May 1968.

Indeed, when I was in New York in 1970 black women seemed to be playing a vanguard role in the educational struggle, demanding not just education from the state but control over what we would all agree is a particularly vital part of the state structure.

3. This leads me to my final point. I think Selma consistently falls into a conspiracy theory of history. Capitalism may have used the Trade Union movement, but the Tolpuddle Martyrs weren't agents of the C.I.A., nor are the miners now. Again, to take one of Selma's favourite example from 'Women, the Unions and Work'. The women who fought for and obtained higher education were not just simple

tools of capitalism. Their fight led to the contradiction between their formal liberal freedom and the actuality of their treatment as sexual objects, literally reproducers of labour power. It was these contradictions subjectively experienced, and now increasingly being analysed, which led many of these women - indeed, charged with the experience of Black liberation, along with women like Selma, who had courageously been thinking of the problem for years, to form the Women's Liberation movement in Britain.

Angela Weir



Dear Race Today

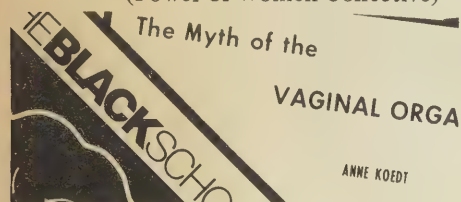
It was with a sense of excitement that we saw the cover of *Race Today*, January 1974 and read the article by Selma James.

Many strands that concern us in the women's movement were pulled together: the divisions of race and sex have been a source of confusion for some time. The view of the straight, white, male left is that these questions are secondary to the 'real' working class struggle around work in the factory which, for them, is waged through the unions (as if there was no work and no struggle in the home). This article places the struggles of black people and women fairly and squarely (as central to) the working class struggle for power and denies what we have so often been told, that it is divisive of it. That is, capitalist divisions which give rise to independent struggles are blamed on us. The apparent contradictions between black and white, men and women, young and old, waged and wageless, have mystified our relationships, and allowed the state to use us one against the other. It is not a question of solidarity between the black movement and the women's movement, but that there is no successful working class struggle that excludes either. Racism and sexism, therefore, are not 'immoral', but anti-working class. It is no coincidence, then, to find this new definition of the class from the feminist point of view in the pages of a journal of the black movement. This is not to say that black men have dealt with their sexism, or that white women have dealt with their racism. It is to say that racism and sexism, being political questions can only be dealt with by the political power of movements and by a political perspective. If the black movement does not deal with sexism and white women do not deal with racism, then the power of both our movements will be undermined, and therefore, the power of the working class. Black women are in a unique position to show the way of both movements and are finding their own ways of organising.

As feminists we base ourselves on the

wageless condition of the housewife, which sustains capitalism, and determines the situation of all women. We sustain capitalism by working for it in the home. We also sustain capitalism by being at its disposal whenever they want cheap labour power. Having no money of our own, we are often eager for whatever pay they offer. We aim to change that. We don't want to be their industrial reserve army any more. Nor do we intend to be their slaves in the kitchen. As Selma wrote, 'We demand wages for the work we do in the home. And that demand for a wage from the state is, first, a demand to be autonomous of men on whom we are now dependant. Secondly, we demand money without working out of the home, and open for the first time the possibility of refusing forced labour in factories and in the home itself.' Those who call themselves revolutionaries, black or white, male or female, and who do not support our struggle against forced labour, who do not see that sexism, the ideology based on the sexual division of labour which we are all undermining, had better change their names.

Power to the sisters and therefore to the class. Esthe Ronay & Judy Macdonald (Power of Women Collective)



Dear Race Today

Although I am not certain, it may be Selma James' concern with the 'working class' that allows her to write 4,000 words about women without mentioning what I think are the two most explosive women's issues of today - the tension between black and white women, and positive sexuality. By ignoring these issues, Selma implicitly affirms their opposites: that there exists such a thing as a homogeneous 'women's movement' and that it is (or should be) anti-men and anti-sex.

Perhaps more fundamental is the need for a set of values to which we can aspire. These values must be put out through the media by all means possible. This is important precisely because women are *not* a homogeneous constituency. Some women are struggling for highly-questionable goals, in a proto-facist manner. It has been my experience that these women are usually the most intense (hysterical?) and articulate, and they dominate the group.

It is essential that a struggle against ideas and actions which are anti-freedom and anti-humanity go on within women's organisations. These ideas include the notion of 'man-as-enemy' and 'sex as trial and exploitation'.

There is also growing tension between black and white women over black men. It cannot be ignored from day to day. At

least in the United States it is out there, explosive and cannot be swept under the rug of theory. I don't find it very helpful to say, as Selma does, that the basis for black and white women coming together is the struggle for an equal wage. Tension would persist even with equal wages. And a prior coming together of women is necessary if we are to win equality in employment: the mere 'wages for housework' cry is too weak for rallying.

Ishmael Reed, poet, wrote recently that young Americans are realising that you don't have to be 'black' before you can be a person. Similarly you don't have to be a 'woman', whatever that is, before you can be a person. To be a person is to decide the conditions and quality of your existence - to be self-actualising. Nevertheless, we are easily trapped into 'blackism' or 'feminism'. It is a dead-end street because being black or female means nothing other than a mass of social conventions, norms and power relations which are our inheritance. Some we accept, others we don't. Since these are undefinable abstractions, the easy route to being 'black' or 'feminist' is to cultivate animosity respectively towards whites or men. Let's get underneath ideology, starting immediately with people, their interests and ideals.

True, many women are flaming angry with men. I don't think the fires should be fed. I don't see how female anger towards men can move from sexism to positive sexuality. And that is the transformation we all want. My reading of the anger of many young, especially white, women towards men is that it has developed because their men are unwilling or perhaps unable to breach the hard, girdle-bound, sex-fearing veneer which women have had imposed on them by their mothers, religion and culture. (Here we should also mention the fathers who really wanted a son and viewed girl children as threats to their masculinity.) Many women in their early twenties are frantic about their chronic virginity. Anxiety reinforces the hard veneer and the circle becomes more vicious. They get screaming angry with men, all the time wanting tenderness, pleasure and friendship.

It is a disservice to wrench wider the yawning gulf between men and women.

The task at hand is self-actualisation. Our roles need total redefinition, in action. We have no models. The women that raised it can give little guidance, except insofar as they are examples of motherlove, humanity and grace. We have to strike out and make our own definitions - of professionalism, motherhood, 'marriage', and citizenship. In the course of this self-actualisation we cannot help but confront the monotheistic, monogamous, money-based society we are caught up in. While undermining this decrepit system we are redefining and actualising ourselves and our social relations.

Selma defines the working class as the

unifying category, since all its members work for capitalists in offices, factories, schools and the home. I agree and am using her concepts and analysis to understand the situation I find myself in. But I'm saying that it is self-actualising, pro-human values that should and do cross-cut race, sex and age groups to unite us in the task of destroying this system, and replacing it with a society that will permit us to love one another.

Teri Turner



Dear Race Today

I find Selma James' observations on the status of the housewife's labour interesting but her conclusions deplorable. 'We demand wages for the work we do', she says. Who are 'we'? As an active member of the women's liberation movement I was under the impression that her demand for a housewife's wage had been rejected by the women's movement as a whole in this country. As a sociologist, concerned with the position of women, and as the author of a book on the housewife to be published in 1974, I cannot agree that wages for housework are the answer to anything, except perhaps the sexist-reactionary demand that women should stay in the home.

There would be no better way of affirming our role as housewives than to be paid by the State for doing housework in our own homes. Exploitation by the State in a fundamentally unsatisfying and socially isolated work role would be added to our other exploitations; it would not surmount them. A housewife's wage would act as an obstacle to the sharing of housework between men and women. It would intensify the obligation that many women feel to be psychologically involved in the cleanliness and tidiness of their homes, and physically involved in long and repetitive housework routines.

Of course, the unpaid work of women in the home should be valued, rather than ignored and belittled as it is now. But this is not the way to do it. From the viewpoint of women's situation, generally a more progressive cry than 'wages for housework' is the abolition of the housewife role. 'Housewife' is a label society puts on us. We must shake it off, by refusing to identify with the housewife role. Men must wash their own shirts and clean their own lavatories. The domestic images held out to small girls of their adult roles must be changed - and so on and so forth.

Does Ms James incidentally think that her demand would ever be met in fact? If there were a State wage for housewives, what kind of wage does she think it would be? If we are to ask for payment, let us instead ask for wages for motherhood or fatherhood - but that is a different point

Ann Oakley

The Middle East Crisis

Helen Lowe

The oil crisis, accompanied as it has been by fuel shortages, plummeting share markets and lost production, has sent waves of panic throughout the metropolitan world. This situation has been accompanied by the usual mystifications. There have been attempts by the environmentalists to put a brave face on the matter by recommending pollution-free bicycles, and governments' hopes that they will be able to stagger on by yet another tattered appeal to the working class to allow increased exploitation in the 'national interest'.

Although the present crisis may be temporary and soon over, it has forced one of the most crucial struggles in the Third World into the factories and homes of the metropolitan countries.

An apparent scrap over a 'small piece of land' has caused to surface dramatically international class interests. It was little expected that Palestinian action would turn the likes of King Faisal into a 'Bolshie Arab' who lends power to the elbow of British miners. But this is exactly what has happened.

The attempt to display Sheikh Yamani and his merry men as acting out of their disinterested support for their oppressed brothers is an astonishing public relations job. What it hides is the fact that the oil embargo is an international reflection of the level of the class struggle in the Middle East.

This crisis had not been unexpected. Even the capitalist press had seen the warning signs (though it could not predict the extent). The *Economist*, on 7 July 1973, warned of the possibility of Palestinian guerrillas sabotaging oil installations in the Middle East. *Business Week*, on 3 November 1973, reported that workers in two oil companies in Kuwait were threatening to shut down production unless the Kuwait government took reprisal measures against U.S. support for Israel.

It is difficult to clarify such a confused situation very briefly. There are so many interests at work in the Middle East, complementary and contradictory, that one can only look at the basic forces, perhaps missing out critical areas in the process. We begin with the obvious.

Oil and Development

The Arab governments are cashing in on the threats of the Palestinian struggle either by increasing nationalisation of foreign oil installations or by raising their revenues or both. The extent to which they get what they want will determine the speed of diplomatic agreement reached over the Palestinians. The reasons for their drive to raise revenues are perhaps the most interesting aspects of the whole situation; it has of course to do with the class forces at work in their own countries.

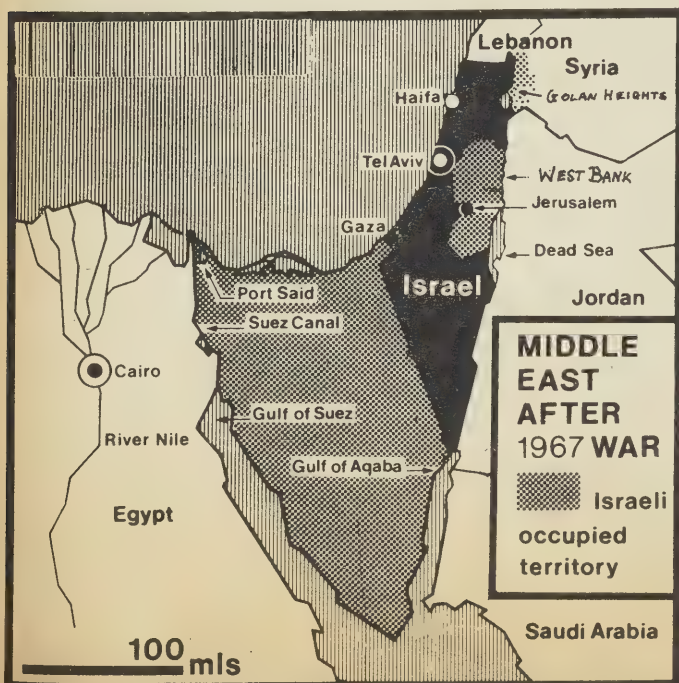
Throughout the Middle East the Arab regimes have, to a

greater or lesser degree, been forced to start looking to internal development. It has become less and less possible to continue to extract the world's most highly profitable commodity in an area where the peasantry are living at or below subsistence. As the armed struggle of resistance among the Palestinian refugees is precisely based on this peasantry, there lies an inherent threat to the Arab regimes. The gradual swing to development has not just taken place in the oil-producing countries. The governments of those countries have also given large quantities of financial aid to countries without oil, such as Egypt. On 20 October 1973, *Business Week* quoted the general manager of the Kuwait Investment Co., which channels aid to other Arab countries, as saying: 'We simply no longer can afford to be filthy rich in a sea of poverty.'

By development, they clearly mean capitalist development: investment in capital-intensive industries, raising the level of technology in agriculture, instituting Welfare State measures and an education system sufficient to produce skilled workers and the managerial class required. The details vary from country to country. In Egypt, for example, there are many technicians and engineers but a shortage of capital. In other countries there may be a lack of technicians. But on the whole the trend is the same. In Saudi Arabia, for example, Japanese and American capital have been involved in investment in capital-intensive industries: petrochemicals, steel mills, aluminium smelters, oil refineries. They have also been involved in the construction of granaries, flour mills and hospitals. Part of the process is seen as the elimination of the peasantry in these areas to destroy the bases of movements such as the Palestinian guerrillas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). In Syria a dam project will displace some 70,000 farmers, many living in villages whose layout is an essential part of the kinship structure of their community. The Syrian regime hopes to replace these villages with collective farms with a high degree of technology - that is, to turn the peasantry into agricultural wage-labour.*

The process of destroying the peasantry in the Middle East was started originally by Jewish capital in Palestine, which evicted them from their land, whether by buying it or stealing it outright. Now all the regimes are doing it. This has created a migrant labour force of enormous dimensions. In Kuwait, over half the population are migrant workers - including Palestinians, Iraqis, and Jordanians, as well as Baluchis, Indians, and Pakistanis. In Dhubai and Abu Dhabi three-quarters of the population are immigrants. In Saudi Arabia, the regime has tried to resist importing labour, but the shortage of skilled labour is making this increasingly difficult to avoid. In Lebanon there was widespread exploitation of Syrian labour until earlier this year when the fighting between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian guerrillas provoked Syria to withdraw and close the borders. Lebanon has since been trying to look elsewhere for labour power, recruiting Turks, Iranians and Pakistanis.

* Internationally, the process of destroying a peasantry is always accompanied by family planning legislation. The present level of capitalist technology and the present level of class struggle are such that genocide (by the Pill and by the gun) is one of the policies of capitalist development in the Third World. It is no different in the Middle East.



The Israeli Class Structure

Israel has been no different. Since the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, Israeli capital has systematically exploited Palestinians who took refuge there in 1948, absorbing them as unskilled and casual wage-labour into the Israeli economy. Indeed, to a certain extent it could be said that by this Israel has shown the way to capital in the Arab countries.

An essential part of the process of demystifying the situation in the Middle East is the need to smash the myth put out by Zionist propaganda that anti-Zionism is tantamount to anti-semitism.

Since the beginning of Zionist immigration to Palestine towards the end of the 19th century right up to 1948 when the Zionist State of Israel was declared, the Arabs whose home was Palestine were systematically evicted from their land. Jew evicting Arab was in reality capital, mainly concentrated and centralised in the hands of Jewish agencies, destroying an Arab peasantry, as a precondition for the growth, at a high level of development, of capitalist production in Palestine. The State of Israel and the capital it defends are in no sense an accident of history. The Zionist planners from the start conceived of the new capitalist enclave in the desert as based on State investment and centralisation of capital. In agriculture, as well as in industry, they envisaged and carried through a high concentration of technology. 'Making the desert bloom' was an achievement of planned, centralised technology beyond anything that had happened anywhere before. Private capital could never have done it.*

Beginning in this way at the highest level of capitalist enterprise, it is not surprising that not only are the trade unions part of the State, but one of its founders. So not only State capital but the terms of 'industrial relations' were planned before the State itself came into being.

The price that capital had to pay for all this was the creation of a modern working class, complete with an expensive education system and Welfare State for Israelis, and a massive expenditure on arms to ensure the continued existence of Zionist Israel against Arabs. None of it would have been possible without enormous aid from abroad - in the form of donations, cheap loans, war reparations and foreign capital investment. Most of this had come and continues to come from the United States. That much of the capital flowing to Israel has been gleaned from Jews of all classes as an insurance policy against an American Hitler is beside the point. The U.S. government condoned it and encouraged it.

In buttressing the Jewish State, the U.S. hardly lacked self-interest. American aid has also poured into Jordan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf; all this designed to do away with the need for direct military intervention in the event of revolutionary uprisings in the area.

The creation of a modern working class in Israel has not been a straightforward process. In the hierarchy of labour powers, Western and Russian Jews are on top - literally, as supervisory, management, highly skilled and technocratic staff. The Oriental (black) Jews (whose experience of oppression and discrimination led to the upsurge of a movement which was given expression by the Israeli Black Panthers Organisation) are the semi-skilled and many of the unskilled workers. The bulk of the unskilled and all the casual labour is done by Israeli Arabs and migrant Arab workers from the territories occupied by Israel after the June 1967 War.

The contradictions inherent in a situation where workers' positions in the hierarchy are determined by race, religion and sex, have given rise to struggles common to all metropolitan countries - for higher real wages, against productivity



deals, for equal pay. Such struggles are not just a threat to investors (including the Histadrut, or Israeli trade union federation, which directly produces about one-quarter of the national product and the State which is responsible for about the same amount), but also to the Zionist State as such. In 1969 the port workers at Ashdod went on strike. The Histadrut pulled some of them before its own tribunal:

The trial opened in the presence of television cameras and had a wide coverage in the country. The workers were denounced as Al Fateh agents and as 'saboteurs'. The threats of the Histadrut leadership were: 'If you are found guilty the maximum sanctions will be applied, which means you will be excluded from the Histadrut, thus losing all the advantages of social security for you and your families'. (1)

Migrant Arab Labour

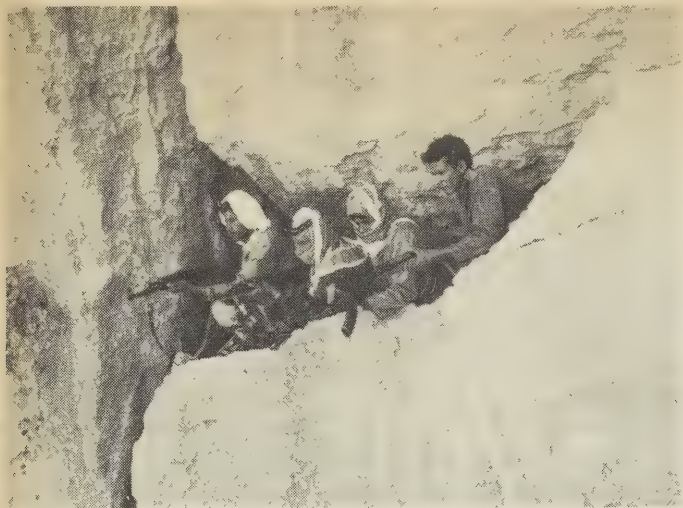
The integration of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank into the Israeli economy has resulted in increasing numbers of Palestinian Arabs crossing the borders into Israel to work; in 1973 before the war it was estimated that 50-55,000 Arabs were officially crossing over, while about 10,000 more were doing it unofficially. While the cheap labour is welcomed by capital in Israel, the Arabs themselves are not - a classic immigrant situation. The Israeli police have conducted a terroristic campaign of harassment to try to prevent migrant workers staying overnight in the country or bringing their families with them. Many of these workers sleep in the open for 5 to 6 nights a week.

In 1971 the Israeli Government implemented a policy of destroying resistance in the Gaza Strip by bulldozing down the homes of 2,500 families of refugees. This action was intended to create wide roads and open squares in the refugee camps themselves in order to make resistance by guerrilla fighters, and concealment by their families and friends, as difficult as possible. According to the United Nations, quoted in the *Economist* on 16 December 1972, 900 of those families - 5,000 people - were still homeless five years later. Israeli policy before the latest war was aimed at completing this operation by doing away with the refugee camps altogether and rehousing refugees in housing estates, providing jobs and welfare in the process, hopefully to be financed by joint Israeli-Arab capital. (Here again is a classic example where a 'welfare' policy has as its only purpose the destruction of working class resistance.

450,000 of the refugees on the West Bank of the River Jordan fled to the East Bank after the 1967 War. 116,000 more fled from camps on the Golan Heights. These people were thus made refugees for a second time in 20 years. Since 1967 the Israeli army have established something approaching 50 military/agricultural settlements on the West Bank. One of these, at Kiryat Arbah, was described in the *Financial Times* on 16 May 1973: 'Closed in by a barbed wire fence and surrounded by watch-towers, the blocks of flats have a fort-like appearance.'

This policy is in line with that pushed by Moshe Dayan

* The Kibbutz movement was crucial to this process, because its level of consumption allowed a high degree of accumulation. Yet this 'primitive' accumulation concealed the technology which gave rise to its use.



since 1967 to encourage Jewish purchase of land on the West Bank. The Jewish National Fund and the Israel Lands Commission (both responsible for large quantities of land purchased before 1948 in what is now Israel) have already been buying several thousands of acres, while several senior army officers as well as some Government ministers have made private purchases using Arab 'land rats'. These methods are not new: they were used by the Zionist settlers from the beginning. The same *Financial Times* article reported: '5,000 dunams (about 1,250 acres) being settled near Akraba, the scene of demonstrations by left-wing Israelis, 6 of whom were fined by a military court in Nablus.'

The Palestinian Resistance

The fact that the Arab regimes control the supply of money and arms, as well as training facilities, of the resistance movement, has enabled them to exercise a considerable degree of control over its politics. Aid from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia 'has been channelled almost exclusively to Fateh, whose moderate nationalist ideology made it the least threatening of the commando organisations'. (2) The Syrian and Iraqi regimes were fully aware of the danger of Palestinian organisations operating within their own territories, and attempted to contain the movement by setting up their own Palestinian organisations, Saiqa and the Arab Liberation Front. The activities of the other groups were considerably curtailed, but as Syria continued to give considerable aid to the movement operating outside of its borders, open confrontation with the regime was avoided. Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, the fedayeen (commandos) saw the value of maintaining Syria as a rear-base to which they could resort if the regimes in Beirut and Amman decided to attempt a crack-down on their operations - which is precisely what happened.

By June 1970 the resistance movement was torn by political factions. When Egypt and Jordan agreed to the 'Rogers Plan' (proposed by the U.S.) for a cease-fire, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Popular Democratic Front (PDF) - the 'left-wing' of the resistance organisations - saw the only way forward as the armed struggle against the Jordanian regime itself. All the Arab states, including Egypt, were critical of the commandos' initiative. On 16 September 1970 King Hussein of Jordan put his government in the hands of the army under Palestinian Brigadier-General Mohammed Daoud. This was the trigger for the breakout of civil war in Jordan which lasted for ten days.

At the end of the civil war, the Jordanian army re-established control over the countryside and the towns. What Hussein was most concerned about was that the resistance movement had created armed militias within the towns themselves, including Amman.

Despite large-scale Syrian intervention in aid of the commandos in the north of Jordan, the outcome of the ten-day fighting was highly unfavourable to the resistance, which eventually lost a large portion of its

manpower and weapons, effective control of its prestige and popularity Even in the case of Syria, which did come to their aid, the intervention was camouflaged in such a manner as not to commit the Syrian government militarily on the side of the guerrillas. (3)

By July 1971 most of the guerrillas had been dislodged from Jordan. While the other Arab regimes protested vocally, none of them did anything about it. At the same time, nearly all the Arab countries had been taking part in various negotiations towards a political settlement of the Palestinian thorn in their side. The defeat of the fedayeen in Jordan took the pressure off.

By the end of 1972, the Lebanese regime was putting pressure on the fedayeen operating from camps in the Lebanon. Israel and Jordan were trying to enforce the 'Ammanisation' of Beirut. This was explained by the *Economist* on 16 December 1972: 'an army crack-down to throw the guerrilla movement's headquarters and research centres out of Beirut'. On 5 May 1973, the *Economist* reported that the Lebanese army had surrounded two refugee camps and fighting had started. Sixty people were reported dead. Yasser Arafat of Al Fateh rushed in to negotiate a settlement. This, commented the *Economist*, 'could give Mr. Arafat the chance to smash the Popular Democratic Front once and for all'.

Although the resistance movement may have been weakened after its confrontations with the Jordanian and Lebanese regimes, it was by no means out of action. In the planning of the 'Yom Kippur' War the Egyptian and Syrian governments made full use of the resistance movement. The *Financial Times*, on 26 October, reported that:

the guerrillas maintain that it was due to Israeli obsession with their 'terrorist' activity that led them to ignore the significance of mobilisation in Syria and Egypt.

And on 6 December, the *Sunday Times* stated:

For the past four years, the Israeli intelligence services have concentrated upon combating the Palestinian guerrillas and, in particular, their exploits abroad. But Israeli manpower is scarce; to staff this effort, Israel had to withdraw - principally from Egypt and Syria - a considerable proportion of its political intelligence agents. The resulting dearth of political intelligence was to lead Israel into what a British diplomat later called 'a classic case of intelligence understanding the capabilities of the enemy but not his intentions'.

This article also implies that the Saiqa attack on the Austrian camp for refugee Russian Jews on 28 September - a few days before the war was planned to start - was a deliberate attempt by Egypt and Syria to distract attention from their war preparations.

The resistance movement also played its role in the October fighting. For the first time all the groups were under a coordinated command, taking orders from Yasser Arafat. They were able to carry on harassment and sabotage in Israel itself, and to contribute units to fight with the Syrian and Jordanian armies. The *Financial Times* article added: 'Well-armed and possessing mobile missiles, they have acted as an irritant to Israeli aircraft on the southern slopes of Mount Hermon.'

Along with the various measures taken by the different Arab regimes to contain if not destroy Palestinian resistance, and to centralize control in the hands of the nationalist moderates (Fateh), the changes in conditions for the refugees themselves were having considerable impact. The policy of employing refugees as cheap labour power within Israel (and also by Israeli capital in the occupied territories) was responsible for a new trend, which the *Economist* on 16 December 1972 pointed out, 'shows a widening disparity between the Palestinians who have to live under the Israelis and those outside dedicated to fighting them'. The resistance appears so far to have failed to make its politics and organisation relevant to the new needs of the Palestinians.

Since the key to the whole situation in the Middle East is the position of the Palestinian refugees, the way they conduct their struggle could be crucial to the future. The Palestinian



resistance set out on the whole to mobilise young men, to train and discipline them as a fighting force (and finding the latter considerably difficult, engendering the need for its own military police force) with the aim of building a movement based on the return to the land. The struggle was for national liberation, without questioning the class contradictions inherent in nationalism. The PFLP and the PDF, which did raise these contradictions, appear to have tried to deal also with the question of sexism within the movement. In an interview given to Gerard Chaliand in 1969-70, one woman member of the PDF said:

Up to now we have been learning to read and write, to knit and sew. We make clothes for the fedayeen, for our family, and we also sell some. We have also been on a military training course and learned how to work a Kalachnikov [a machine gun]. We are from the camp at Irbid, we have been refugees since 1948. Before the PDF we stayed at home and did the cooking. (4)

Another woman:

Nothing is simple for us, we have to overcome every kind of difficulty at once. We are trying to do this, in the camps, step by step. Women in this part of the world have a long history of subservience. A woman's economic and social status is such that she is entirely dependent on her husband. As a result, it is generally true that if a female militant marries, for example, she will stop being a militant, unless her husband is one as well. Women here are dependants, clothed and fed by their husbands, and find it almost impossible to assert themselves outside the circle of home and children. (5)

These statements by women activists in their 20s - one a schoolteacher and the other a graduate - highlight the extraordinary difficulties for women in the struggle. A further statement, by an 11-year-old orphan girl in a school run by Al Fateh, perhaps raises the question of the whole future of the Middle East:

I lost my daddy in the war, in a battle in the valley of Bethshinan. Before he was killed we lived in Irbid, we had a house there, but it was knocked down. My daddy was a housepainter. I went to school, it was nice there. I haven't got a family, except an aunt who lives in Irbid in a camp. I like it here because the teacher is like a sister or a mother to us. I work hard because I want to be educated, but what I want most of all, when I grow up, is to be a fedayi like my brother. (5)

Feudalism has always based its mode of labour on the family and the subjugated woman and child. An advanced and centralised capital has gone a long way in the creation of a class of wage labourers in the whole of the Middle East. Both by its mode of labour and by the resistance to its presence this feudal regime is being undermined.

Settlement not Solution

It would appear now that the wheelings and dealings behind the backs of the people concerned are aimed at establishing some sort of autonomous Palestinian State on the West Bank. Involved in these negotiations are the Palestinian Liberation

Organisation, all the Arab governments (except King Hussein who is kicking against having his artificial kingdom sliced in half) and the USSR, not to mention U.S. activities in the area. According to the *Financial Times*, on 12 November, the Russian proposal to Yasser Arafat was for a 'demilitarised Palestinian State incorporating the West Bank and the Gaza Strip . . . This State would receive massive international development aid after the conclusion of a final peace settlement to compensate and rehabilitate the Palestinian refugees for 25 years of suffering. King Faisal is expected to be the key figure in organising Arab aid . . . Palestinian sources say there is a very good chance that the Fateh . . . will accept the Soviet plan.' In this way the Arab states are hoping finally to pluck the Palestinian thorn out of their side.

What the future holds cannot be clear. Many of the trends described in this article are in their infancy. Clearly the emerging Arab proletariat, both the migrant Palestinians and the new wage-labourers in the Arab countries, are increasingly faced with having to take the struggle forward. The form of organisations which they use to do this cannot be predicted. But capitalism in the Arab states is no more isolated from the rest of the world than capitalism anywhere else can be, and has already been considerably shaken by inflation, by strikes, by student struggles and by demands from women. As for the situation in Israel itself, capital there has always been international. The increasing militancy over the last few months of the wage demands of the Israeli working class, of the demands by black Jews for decent living conditions, of the dissatisfaction among Russian Jewish immigrants, has put a new pressure on the ruling class. Together with reaction against the Palestinian resistance and the latest war, there appears to be a strong move to tighten the Israeli working class belt. At the same time Meir's ruling party is considerably split by criticism from within and from the press about the conduct of the war. The different right-wing factions recently united into the Likud (Unity) Party under the leadership of Menachem Begin. General Sharon, who went against official policy in surrounding the Egyptian Third Army in Sinai, appears to have emerged as a war-hero, and is sufficiently dangerous to the ruling party to the extent that his name and face have been officially censored from press reports. He played a key role in the creation of the Likud. This new unity of the Right-wing Parties in Israel may well lead to a considerable shift in the balance of power in the Knesset (Parliament) after the elections on 31 December.

In an article on 9 November in the *Financial Times* - 'The Price of Peace could be a Lost General Election for Mrs. Meir' - it was posed that 'the key questions must still be how tight the U.S. will apply the screws and at what point the Israelis will dig their heels in'.

Whatever happens in the election on 31 December, the new government will have to deal not only with coming to a peace settlement, but also with the Israeli working class. The squeeze will be on, and the question is whether the Israeli working class will continue to allow the Zionists to remain in power when Zionism can no longer produce to goods.

As for the Arab governments, the oil they are withholding will not go rancid. The Palestinian refugee has prodded them into discovering how to fight the war for accumulation without arms. But they in turn have armed the working class in Britain with the power of strike without striking. The best strategies of capitalist planners oft go astray.

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Fighting Racism in France

North African workers in France, particularly in Marseilles, have responded with a series of strikes and demonstrations against a rising tide of right-wing fascism.

In December issue of *Race Today*, Adrian Adams recorded the beginning of a protest movement:

There have been earlier strikes in France, in which immigrant workers have played an active part: Renault, Penarroya But this time they took the initiative to defend themselves as immigrants. The Algerian Government's recent decision to suspend temporarily the flow of migrant workers to France, was undoubtedly largely the result of the French Government's failure to act in defence of Algerian workers in France; but the new militancy of these workers may have been a contributing factor.

On 25 August, an Algerian worker knifed to death a French bus driver. The right-wing fascist group, *Ordre Nouveau*, mobilised a section of the white workers, consisting mainly of *pieds noirs* (the French settlers forced to leave Algeria during the independence struggles) to attack North African workers. The local paper, *Le Meridional*, published several virulent anti-immigrant editorials. During the weeks following the killing, eleven North Africans were found dead and several more were wounded.

All this is set against a background of several pieces of government legislation increasing controls over immigration and

over immigrants in France. The present quota agreed between the French and Algerian governments was only 25,000 a year. Immigrants in France have to get both their visitor's permit and their work permit through the police - previously the latter was got through the labour ministry.

The North African population, for its part, has been organising a series of unofficial strikes in different factories throughout France and the MTA (*Mouvement des Travailleurs Arabes*) organised rent and hunger strikes.

On 15 December, a bomb exploded in the Algerian Embassy in Marseilles, killing 4 people and seriously injuring 20 others. The police suspect a right-wing group of *pieds noirs* of being responsible.

In Marseilles, a demonstration of over 15,000 North African workers (the largest since the war) accompanied the funeral convoy for the 4 victims. The demonstration was tense and emotional. The demonstrators walked through the streets, at first with cries of 'God is Great' and 'God is Unique', but later changing these to shouts of 'Down with Racism'. The demonstration ended at the airport where the bodies were flown back to Algeria. The leaders of the organisations present, including the MTA, appealed to the crowd to disperse. Despite this, the police and flying squad charged the crowd on the

pavement, using tear gas. Three people were sent to hospital.

On 15 December, two demonstrations - one called by *Amicale*, a government funded organisation, and the other by the MTA - took place in front of the devastated offices of the Algerian Embassy. The MTA demonstration was prevented by the police from going to the offices of *Le Meridional* to protest against its incitement to racial hatred and the role it played during the time of the racist attacks in August.

On 18 December, in Bordeaux, a one-day strike was called by MARP, the Movement Against Racism and Anti-semitism and for Peace, and the Association for the Support of Immigrant Workers. A rally was organised in Place Saint Michel, where a number of immigrant workers live.

In Paris, twenty organisations called for all workers and anti-fascists to demonstrate in Place de la Stalingrad on 20 December.

The MTA has called upon immigrant workers to stage a one-day strike in several firms in Marseilles.

As we go to press, the movement is increasing in size and power. New demands replace old ones as the immigrant workers begin to pick up issues about conditions at their place of work and in the community.



Looking for the End of the Line

In Britain the word 'immigrant' is used interchangeably with 'black'. To such a degree is this true that a leading British politician once said that if no more immigrants entered Britain the numbers would still rise; immigrants, he said, had a high birth rate! But once we raise our sights beyond this scepter'd isle, we see that immigration is a fundamental factor of industrial organisation and has always been, beginning with slavery, through the Enclosures and the Clearances, up to Germans in Russian forced labour camps and Turks, Yugoslavs and Italians in German auto factories - a more sophisticated forced labour camp. South Africa, with a massive African reserve army at home, nevertheless is dependent for 12 per cent of its labour on immigrants from other African countries. Every immigration has served capital by weakening and dividing workers if not by race, then by language and custom.

This is not to say there is no distinction between black and white immigrant labour. There is at least one important distinction: the second generation of white immigrant is not branded by skin colour. Those who are branded, are able more to maintain a continuity of struggle, from the new arrivals to the new 'natives'. This continuity of struggle between the generations is a reality in Britain now. We are in a good position, therefore, to understand all the forces ranged against the immigrant, white or black, and the forces that have yet to be mobilised. Below is an interview with an immigrant from Southern Italy to Ford in Genk, Belgium. Some information is new and surprising. More startling perhaps are the echoes of New World Slavery, the Enclosures, and the Clearances in a modern Ford factory.

Q: Now, in this part of Belgium there are a lot of Italian workers who have come up here looking for work. Where do most of them come from?

A: Well, most of them come from the underdeveloped part of Italy - from Bari in the South, or from Sardinia. But there's one thing that should be said: that many of them don't stay. For instance, over the past few months there have been two batches of Italians arrived here - 72 in all. And out of those there are now only two left. And they have only stayed because they're forced to stay for family reasons. They *have* to carry on working here because they have to send money home.



When they come here to Limburg they have only two choices - if you can call it choice! It's either Ford or the mines. The mines are lousy work - they slave you and its filthy. And Ford . . . well . . . they say that you *can* get used to it! But it's shit, and the only reason anyone would stay there is because he *has* to if he's going to live. A sort of resignation sets in after a while.

It's no life for a young man here. With the money they pay you, you've got just enough for a bed, food for a week, cigarettes, and if you're lucky a drink on Saturday night. And that's the lot! Most of the lads here start the week with just enough money to pay their week's bus fares out to Genk everyday, or out to Winterslag [the local coal mine]. The working week is a sort of Calvary, a terrible experience for them - they end up virtually on their knees at the end of it, asking round for loans to be able to pay their meals until they get their next wage packet.

Recruiting Slaves

Q: How do Ford actually manage to get these workers to come up here from Italy?

A: Well, they go down to Italy, where they have a sort of recruiting office. They arrive with a contract in their hands, which to the lads down there really looks like Heaven. So they come up to Belgium, and when they get here they find that they're presented with another contract that they're expected to sign here - and this contract is not quite so nice!

Now, what happens when they arrive at the Genk plant - which is usually the next day after they arrive in Belgium - is that they're all sat down in a hall as if they were back at school. First of all they're shown films, telling them about safety in the factory. Which is fair enough. But then one of the Ford officials gets up and talks to them. And what he says is as follows (and if you don't believe it, you can ask any of the lads here): 'Right lads. Now we don't want you to be under any illusions. The reason that you're here is to work, and you're going to work! The company expects you to show willing, and if there's anyone who doesn't like the idea, he might as well pack his bags and leave.'

There was one lad who came here to work at Ford, and he went to one of these meetings. When he heard what they were saying, he couldn't restrain himself. He was so disgusted that he jumped up and shouted at this foreman, or whatever he was: 'You people here are pigs! Rotten exploiters! I'm leaving here and now!' And he just walked out, even though he didn't have a penny to his name, had no possibility of ever getting home, and had no prospect of finding another job in the area here.

I tell you, the way that Ford treat

their foreign workers here is like a sort of . . . slavery. In Italy, if you have a job, they never stand over you with whips. But they do at Ford Genk! If you're working and you turn out less pieces in the day than you're supposed to, then they give you a black mark, and if you get too many of them, then you're out on your neck.

Mind you, it's beginning to get to the point where the lads aren't going to take much more of this sort of treatment. They all know what shit it is. They all understand how they're blackmailed to work here. And things got to the point a few months ago when there was big trouble in Genk, and Ford called in first the Italian consul (to make suitable threatening noises), then the police, and finally the unions. But none of them could do much to calm the anger the lads felt.



The things that Ford do here are wicked. For instance, say you work on the Presses. You might be a man or a woman, because here they don't make any distinction of sex on the job - you might find a woman who works on the Presses and a man who works on sewing . . . anyway, if you injure yourself on the job, they stitch you up and put you back to work immediately. This happens all the time here. There are people here who've virtually lost a finger or a thumb on the presses, and instead of giving you time off to recover, they just stitch it up and put you back on the job. The same goes for the mines. Their attitude is that if you want your money, you're going to have to work for it.

It's filthy, it really is. If a worker comes up here to work, then he ought to be treated like a worker, and not a bloody

animal. In Italy even animals get better treatment than we do here. If they get sick we make sure that they're looked after until they get better. But you can't say even that much for Ford.

Unions

Q: But what about the unions here? Don't they do anything for the immigrant workers?

A: The unions? You must be joking! They're pigs! There was one lad here who was working in the mines. He was out in front of the mine one Saturday afternoon, and a car ran into him. He was really cut up, so he was taken to the hospital. Now, seeing it was the end of the week, he had no money. So we went to the union and asked if they could oblige with a bit of cash. But they said that they would not do a thing, because he should have been more careful crossing the road, and anyway he must have been drunk in the first

chines again tomorrow. There's not many of the lads willing to lead a life like that! Even if they have very little choice in the matter.



The way they treat you at Ford is to humiliate you, make you feel nothing. There's the foreman standing over you, and if you fall behind even slightly, he'll come up and tell you to step on it, because if you don't he'll give you a black mark. You feel like a little school-boy. Fully grown men, with wives and kids, who are made to feel frightened of the foreman - some jumped up little nothing who has the power to give orders. And the reason that they're frightened is that they know that if they lose their job at Ford, there's unemployment around these parts that they might never get a job.

where there's no industry, and where workers aren't organised in the same way. But that's not going to last long either, because you must have read what's been happening in the South - Battipaglia, Reggio Calabria . . . all the rioting. You know, we Italians take a long time to get moving, but when things start, then you have to look out, because there's going to be trouble. We want our rights, and if we don't get them, then we're willing to wreck until we do. I think there's a lot of the Italians here are beginning to get the sense of what's happening back home, and are starting to wonder what they can do themselves.

Spitting at Ford

Q: I was told that a group of workers was brought up here from Sardinia to work either at Ford or the mines, and that after a few weeks, out of 400, almost all of them had left. Is that true?



place! Drunk, when he didn't even have the money to buy food! And not only that, but when he went in to the mine to start work finally, he found that he'd been sacked in his absence. And once again the union wouldn't do a thing for him. That's how much the unions care for us!

Divide and Rule

Q: Do Ford try to split up the immigrant workers they employ here?

A: Well, you must have heard what happened at Citroen in Brussels. There was a big strike because they tried to split up two Italian workers who were working next to each other on the lines. What they prefer is that you have an Italian, then a Turk, then a Moroccan, then a Yugoslav, all working on the lines in such a way that nobody can talk to the person next to him because he doesn't understand the language. Because they know that if people can get together and talk about the shit they find themselves in, then there's going to be trouble.

But they can't do that at Ford Genk, because they've signed on so many Italians over the years that it's impossible to keep them apart any more. Mind you, although they've been getting Italians to work here ever since the plant was opened in 1964, you'll find very, very few who've been here since the start. Most of them leave after a very short time, because they can't stand it. The ones who do stick it out are more like machines than men . . . they come home at night, and the only thing they have time to think about is how they'll be working on the ma-

And what's more, if you're an immigrant without a job in Limburg, you have the police on your back the whole time. They want to know who you are, why you aren't working, where you're going and so on. They even look into your pockets to see if you've got money. And if you've no money, they can just pack you off back to Italy like so many cattle - take you to the border and leave you to fend for yourself. This happens all the time. A sort of continual harassment. This is the sort of thing that immigrants are up against - first Ford, which is like a mad-house; then the mines, which are worse than a slave ship; then the whole army of the police ranging through from the Italian consul to the unions.

Tradition of Resistance

Q: From what you say it sounds as if Ford and the mine employers have immigrant workers here completely at their mercy.

A: No. I wouldn't say that. Because, as I say, the lads here *know* the situation they're in, and before long they're going to be in a position to really do something about it.

The employers here think that they're pretty clever. When they go to Italy looking for workers, they don't go to the North, because there's industry in the North of Italy, and the workers there have got themselves organised to get their rights. Over the last couple of years there's been great upheavals in the North - around Turin, Venice and so on. No, what they do is go down to the South,

A: Not almost all of them. *All* of them! Even if they know they'll not find other work, most of them would rather hoe fields in Italy than do a favour for the 'signori' of Ford or the 'signori' of the mines. I tell you, there are some of the lads here who've worked at Ford, and it sickens them to even hear the name Ford. I've seen people standing by the roadside, and when a Ford transporter passes, they spit at it, because of their hatred for what Ford has done to them. They say that they'd never buy a Ford car for the rest of their lives, even if it meant going everywhere on foot.



The lads who arrive here to work at Ford come up from Italy on the train. They've been travelling for days, and when they get here, they're not given any sort of time to get used to the place, to look around the town and see what it's like. No, they're put to work almost straight away. They're given a little money by Ford before they come, for travelling expenses and so on. But by the time they get here it's more or less all gone, and they have no choice but to work. They get here in the afternoon, and they're expected to be up by 4 the next morning for the morning shift at Genk. They are brought here just to work . . . nothing else. In fact I would say they're *imported*, because Ford sees them not as workers, not as humans, but as so much raw material for the production lines.

REVIEWS

Black Star: A view of the life and times of Kwame Nkrumah
London, Allen Lane, £2.50

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the Republic of Ghana, who was overthrown by a military coup in February 1966 and died in exile in April 1972, is still in the news more than a year after his body was brought home for burial.

Normally when a leader in Africa is overthrown or dies, he is likely to be quickly forgotten and the mention of his name evokes little or no response. Nkrumah, however, is not only widely remembered; his work and ideas are the most widely debated, popular and controversial issues among black people and those who support and understand the background to the anti-colonial struggle. Nkrumah is the foremost hero in that arena.

To study the African revolution without taking account of Nkrumah's writings and experiences is to be dishonest, subjective and frivolous. Nkrumah is the most talked about African today from Cape to Cairo, from Dakar to Tananarive and throughout the communities of Africans in the diaspora. Numerous magazine and newspaper articles, as well as books, are still being produced on Nkrumah, the man whose name gives political inspiration to patriotic black people.

Black Star by Basil Davidson is one of the more important works to be published recently. Since Nkrumah was imperialism's Enemy Number One in Africa, the western capitalist mass media tried their utmost to distort his ideas and contribution to the struggle against colonialism and the politicisation of black people internationally. The importance of Basil Davidson's book is that it corrects many of the distortions.

For instance, the capitalist press interpreted or used the exaggerated meaning of 'Osagyefo', Nkrumah's title, as 'Redeemer', when in actual fact it meant 'a victor in war'. The idea was to portray Nkrumah as a megalomaniac who liked being made a Jesus-figure. They also endlessly talked about the non-existent Nkrumah wealth and the money they alleged was banked in London and Geneva.

Black Star is quite readable, though a bit too cautiously written in some parts, so that one begins to ask what exactly is the standpoint of the writer; or why write a book if you are not sure of what you want to say.

Throughout the book, one of the main criticisms appears to be that the Convention People's Party (CPP), Nkrumah's party, suffered from a lack of internal democracy and participation by the masses. Surely that is an effect, rather

than a cause; it is a symptom of the lack of a correct socialist ideology by the CPP leadership and cadres, which produced that kind of bureaucracy.

It was possible to overthrow the government of Nkrumah the way it happened not because of bureaucracy and lack of participation, but because you cannot press forward with revolutionary reforms when you are not backed by a revolutionary army. The army will overthrow you to defend its capitalist interests, as the experience of Sukarno's Indonesia and Allende's Chile have demonstrated. To continue with revolutionary programmes you need a revolutionary army and well-politicised and armed masses. A mass party may be all right for the anti-colonial struggle but not for a socialist reconstruction.

Dr. Nkrumah himself realised the nature of some of these problems after his overthrow, and his last books, *Class Struggle in Africa* and *My Revolutionary Path* (published by Panaf Books, London), bear witness to this. It is important to make a distinction between Nkrumah before and after independence and Nkrumah after his overthrow in terms of his own ideological development. This Basil Davidson does not do.

Nkrumah's final two books and this by Basil Davidson provide some useful material for the debate, which must be intensified, on the relevance and application of Marxism-Leninism in the Third World.

Chen Chimutengwende

The Pond Poems by Mervyn Morris

London New Beacon Books, £1.60
(hardback), 80p (paperback).

One of the poet's most important tools is vocal facility in syntax. No matter how complex, the theme or the form that he or she renders into verse, style and originality depends upon the unique sound that the poet gives to images and ideas. In this respect Mervyn Morris of Jamaica, whose first collection has recently been published by The New Beacon Press, is what is commonly known as an accomplished poet. There is a discipline and balance in the nature of his writing that consistently identifies the tone that his work strives for in relation to its theme, but paradoxically this consistency tends in this collection to weaken his poetic achievement in revealing a total lack of adventurous expressiveness even where his subject matter promises it.

Accomplished poet though Mr. Morris certainly is, in the end much of his work is academic in tone and at the same time consciously purified by poetic restrictions that tend to perform the duty of enshrining a poetic rather than a natural

opinion. It seems to me that some of the work in this collection is too cute. There are few pieces that lift in language beyond a kind of conscious control, and where this might help to define the theme within the verse, Mr. Morris' linguistic imagination rarely overcomes simple literate cleverness.

When the eyes turn in
Will the mind dare grin?
If the eyes speak true
Will the heart laugh too?

If I have given the impression that this is not nevertheless an enjoyable collection in its own way, I am wrong. One poem that effectively utilises this author's particular cleverness and accomplishment into a humorous light but telling whole is 'I am the Man' (p.15). And at the other end of the spectrum we have the touching, subtle and totally surprising title poem (p.43) with its poignant evocation of the terrors of a libertine childhood.

It seems to me in fact that Mervyn Morris has avoided his truer strengths in the majority of his poems in this collection in favour of deploying less effective but more fashionable stylistic forms in the verse that is here collected, for his work really comes alive when there is an element of narrative statement in the forefront of his form and theme, such as in 'Case-History, Jamaica' (p.19). In fact I am of the opinion, having read and re-read this collection, that Mr. Morris has a novelist's sense of organisation and a poet's eye, and in reality, if pure verse is to work, the poet's sense of adventure must supersede the narrative author's sense of discipline and organisation that tends to turn such short verses here as 'Love Story' (p.29) into mere clever attempts to recreate poetic effects rather than to state human truths.

Mervyn Morris is stated in the biography on this collection to have a growing reputation as a poet. Judging from the clarity of his style and the nature of his choice of themes, I venture to suggest that what is more important is that he has a growing potential as an author of verse and more than verse.

Lindsay Barrett

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AREA ROUND-UP

A monthly non-evaluative account of activity in race relations in all areas of the country. Drawn from the Institute of Race Relations' press cutting service of over 400 national and local newspapers.

Local News

Two Liverpool clubs, patronised mainly by coloured people, have been attacked by racial bigots, claims Mr. G Obianyo, general secretary of the National Union of Nigeria on Merseyside and a member of the Liverpool community relations council. He says that the clubs, the first of their kind to be opened outside the Toxteth district, have both been damaged by fire recently, that there has been unpleasantness from some people since they opened six months ago, and that some customers had been attacked. He said local coloured leaders were afraid that some coloured people were 'fast running out of patience and we dread to see a repeat of some of the occurrences of a few summers ago. The matter is coming to a head, though.' A senior detective said they were investigating the fires, but there was no evidence so far that they were prompted by racial prejudice (*Liverpool Daily Post* 15/12).

EEC aid?

Robin Morgan writes that immigrant workers in Yorkshire's West Riding could have aid from Common Market funds under the new social policy which is expected to be adopted next month. The British Government is being urged to have coloured immigrants included as migrant workers for whom provision has been made. The policy is 'designed to ensure that these people are adequately protected and that they have rights in line with indigenous workers' (*Yorkshire Post* 27/11).

Crc accused of bias

Derby crc is biased against the indigenous population, claims United Party chairman SP Gibson. He has taken particular exception to cro George Scott's recent statement that 'we see the reeducation of the host community, particularly the younger generation, as our highest priority'. Mr. Gibson says that this implies that the indigenous population should be asked to change their way of life to fit in with the immigrant community. The United Party believes the opposite. He stressed that his party was not in favour of compulsory repatriation but of integration of immigrants already here, and suggested that if his party could get representation on the local crc they could

get their ideas about integration across to the leaders of the immigrant communities. He also claims that the crc's official attitude has encouraged the formation of ghettos (*Derby Evening Telegraph* 5/12).

Pakistanis overcharged

Pakistanis who arrive late at night at Birmingham airport claim that they are being overcharged by taxi drivers. They need their own transport arranged by their own countrymen, the West Midland Traffic Commissioners were told when considering an application by Mr. A Aziz for a permanent licence to operate a mini-bus service to the airport several evenings a week. The application has been opposed by local transport organisations who say that an extra service is unnecessary (*Birmingham Post* 6/12).

Police protection

Police are protecting a refugee Ugandan Asian family in Huntingdon who have been the victims of gangs of teenagers who gathered outside their home and smashed windows. The family said: 'We are grateful to the police, but we are worried that the violence may start again. So we have applied to Greater London Council for a home in Hemel Hempstead where we have friends' (*Cambridge Evening News* 28/11).

London

Barnet crc's first meeting was constantly interrupted by members of the National Front shouting slogans. The NF contingent, led by Mr. Blaise Wyndham of the Camden and Brent branch, also organised a demonstration outside the meeting hall. The Rev. Reginald Trueman was appointed chairman of the crc. A full-time officer is to be appointed later (*Hampstead and Highgate Express* 30/11).

'No more confidence'

At a meeting of Haringey council, Cllr. B Lewis accused the council of 'dragging their feet' over the opening of a hostel for homeless teenagers in Tottenham. Lewis said it was an emergency: 'Many have nowhere to go and get involved with the law. Some are in remand homes and would like bail, but have nowhere to go so have to stay there.' Social services chairman Cllr. R Young said delays had been caused by alterations needed in the building. This all follows youth club leader Pastor Morris' break with Haringey crc. He says his club 'has no more confidence in the way the Community Relations Council handles its affairs, especially in tackling the needs of young people.' A crc spokesman said they were pressing the council to open the

hostel as soon as possible (*Hornsey Journal* 23/11).

Club row

A closure order on the youth club at the Sir Learie Constantine Centre, Willesden has caused a row between Brent Campaign Against Racial Discrimination, who have up till now run the youth club, and the management committee of the centre, who made the order without consulting them. The Chairman claims that windows have been broken by the youths using the club. However, the club has continued to run in the usual manner despite the attempts by the warden to get the youths to leave (*Willesden and Brent Chronicle* 23/11).

Black councillor dropped

Kensington and Chelsea's Labour Party decision to drop black councillor Edgar Rennie from its team to fight the 1974 local council elections has come 'as a bombshell' to a large number of North Kensington residents who have been aided by Rennie's brand of grassroots politics. He represents the Pembroke ward which he won from the Conservatives two years ago. He claims that he has been given no valid reason for being dropped: 'The only reason that I can think of is that I have spoken out very strongly against various things and have unfortunately voiced black fears and hopes rather too forcefully.' He is now threatening to oppose the official labour candidate as an independent. A local community leader said the local party's decision could 'revive fears in the area that the Labour Party is racially inclined'. Labour Chief Whip Cllr. H Machol said the matter had nothing to do with colour, but that Rennie had not been seen at ward meetings and consequently had not been nominated by the ward parties. He admitted that Rennie had 'sometimes embarrassed the local party' (*Evening Standard* 10/12).

Police baffled

Yet another wave of attacks on Asian-owned shops in the Tooting area has baffled police who thought that the culprits behind similar attacks some weeks ago had all been tracked down. The attacks have mainly involved smashing windows. However, the police hope to catch the people responsible soon, particularly as there are at present more police in the area — the Special Patrol Group has gone into Wandsworth for a few weeks (*South London Press* 7/12).

New advice centre

Lambeth crc is hoping to deal with the problem of large groups of unemployed youth 'who roam through Brockwell

Park' and are causing concern to residents and park staff because of their aggressive behaviour. They are to set up a permanent advice centre at the Herne Hill end of the park (*South London Press* 23/11).

Community industry

A scheme to provide training and jobs for 30 unemployed black youths is being considered by Lambeth Council's Planning Committee. The idea was suggested by Brixton Neighbourhood Community Association which wants to start a community industry, an arts laboratory and an advice centre in three houses in Stockwell. Mr. Courtney Laws, director of the Association, said: 'This is really a programme to stimulate these young people to do something purposeful within the community' (*South London Press* 27/11).

Marriage guidance

West Indians in Merton are being offered a chance to train as marriage guidance counsellors so that they can 'help their own community adapt to the British life-style and approach to matrimony'. The National Marriage Guidance Council has enlisted the help of the local crc to try and stimulate interest in their service among West Indians (*Wimbledon News* 7/12).

RRB

It seems likely that the forthcoming legislation on sex discrimination under the Equal Opportunities Commission, proposed for women, may be designed to also encompass racial discrimination. The idea seems to have been given fresh impetus from Lord Rothschild's 'Think Tank' which looked at race relations in 1973 (*Daily Telegraph* 26/11).

Complaint rejected

The Race Relations Board has rejected a complaint by a Leicester man that it is unlawful to use Wakerley Secondary school solely for Asian children. It says that the school was established as a short-term project for meeting an emergency demand, and the grounds on which the facilities at the school are provided are not related to the Asian children's colour, race or ethnic or national origin but for an educational need (*Leicester Mercury* 13/12).

Clubs use loophole

'If it is not illegal, then it certainly should be', said Walsall crc's secretary Rev. Roger Argyle, commenting on a strict colour bar being operated by several leading local social clubs. A Board spokesman said that by having a selection committee, the clubs are taking advantage of a loophole in the Race Relations Act (*Walsall Observer* 14/12).

Education

The collection of statistics of immigrant school children is to end, according to Education Secretary Mrs. Thatcher. In a written reply to the Commons she said that she had accepted the recommendation of the Select Committee that the collection of the statistics should cease. Mr. David Stephen, director of the Runnymede Trust, said: 'Statistics will still be needed to measure the extent of the specific educational problems of immigrants, otherwise we shall never be rid of the numbers game. Proper educational planning will be impossible. It is essential to keep a check on the possible language and cultural difficulties that some immigrant children, whatever their colour, may encounter' (*Scotsman* 28/11). The decision was slammed by Leicester health and education chiefs who said that the statistics were vital to planning services and dealing with special problems. The local medical officer said that Leicester might still need to collect the statistics locally as there was quite a marked difference in certain health occurrences between ethnic groups. The chairman of the newly formed Leicester-shire Monday Club also deplored the decision to halt the collection of statistics (*Leicester Mercury* 28/11). Mr. Enoch Powell, who had already complained that the 1971 Census showed fewer immigrant pupils than did these statistics, said that it was an extraordinary way of interpreting the Select Committee's recommendation, that 'statistics should cease to be collected on the present unsatisfactory basis', by deciding that they should cease altogether (*Yorkshire Post* 28/11).

More colourful books

According to a report by the National Foundation for Educational Research, many teachers believe in helping children to learn 'to live in a multi-racial society, but just as many do not practise what they teach' (*Daily Mirror* 29/11). The report also states that children's books should be made more colourful 'with black and brown characters to help pupils in today's multi-racial society'. The report, issued by the Schools Council, deals with changes in school curriculum and examinations (*Express and Star* 29/11).

English tests

First tests of English for immigrant children have been pioneered by the National Foundation for Educational Research. They eliminate cultural bias, concentrating on the vocabulary any child picks up in the classroom. The Community Relations Commission welcomed this breakthrough for teachers whose pupils have always been disadvantaged by traditional and possibly culturally-biased programmes (*The Teacher* 7/12).

Girls protest

'More than 800 protesting pupils and teachers from a multi-racial London girls school will be descending on County Hall tomorrow. A convoy of 17 coaches will take the girls, all pupils of Shelburne Comprehensive school in Islington, to hear a public discussion on the ILEA's proposals for reorganising schools in London.' The headmistress of the school said: 'The situation of this school is unique. It caters for the daughters of immigrants who don't want their children educated in mixed schools. It is a very successful school and we are highly over subscribed' (*Evening Standard* 27/11).

Church schools accused

Wolverhampton councillors are to act in the racial discrimination row which has 'flared up at one of the town's Church of England schools'. Lichfield diocesan officials are also investigating controversial application forms dealing with the religion of parents whose children want to attend St Luke's Infants and Junior school. A school governor claims that this is an attempt to stop Indian and Pakistani children from attending school (*Shropshire Star* 29/11).

Muslims fight...

Mr. R. Shahid is taking his wife and daughters back to Pakistan rather than accept Bradford education authority's decision that his 13-year-old daughter must go to a coeducational school. 'I am an orthodox Muslim and I cannot allow my little girl, who has reached the age of puberty, to mix freely with boys.' His wife, who was born in Scotland, and his daughters have never been to Pakistan and Mr. Shahid said they were shattered by it all: 'It is a terrible wrench to give up everything we have here, but they are backing my stand.' He hopes that other Muslim families will follow his example when they realise what is at stake. Mr. Shahid had been told that he could go to prison if he kept his daughter away from school any longer. Bradford's education chairman said that it was 'a great shame' that the children were 'to be deprived of a good English education' (*Daily Telegraph* 27/12).

...and fight

Mr. Mulakh Singh has said that he would rather go to jail than send his two teenage daughters to a mixed Peterborough school: 'They can prosecute me if they like. I would rather go to prison than give in' (*Peterborough Evening Telegraph* 20/11). Peterborough education authority has threatened to prosecute the parents of ten Asian families who are keeping their children away from school (*Daily Express* 23/11). Ten Asian couples decided to send their young daughters to a mixed school in Peterborough rather than face

prosecution. The parents relented after being warned that legal proceedings would be taken against them (*Northamptonshire Evening Telegraph* 28/11).

Employment

Yesterday the Government provided the first solid evidence that it is concerned about the problem of non-English speaking Asian workers, reports management editor John Trafford. In evidence to the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, a Department of Employment spokesman revealed that £120,000 is to be spent annually for the next three years on training facilities. Half the money is coming from the Home Office, the rest from the DE and local authorities. Eight training units are to be set up in centres of Asian population, basically modelled on Ealing's Pathway Industrial Unit. (Financial Times 14/12). The Select Committee on Race Relations is to visit Smethwick at the end of January to collect evidence on its new enquiry into employment. 'Birmingham is not likely to be visited again', said an official. 'We have been there twice in the last five years in connection with other enquiries' (Birmingham Evening Mail 13/12).

Immigrants exploited

Wandsworth Central MP Tom Cox is concerned that immigrants are being exploited by employers under the threat that if they do not comply, their work permits will be withdrawn and they will be deported. He is concerned about the hotel and entertainment industries where immigrants are working particularly long hours for low pay. In the Commons he asked what action the government was taking to ensure that immigrants got union rates for their work. For the Department of Employment, Mr. Dudley Smith said that on issuing permits the department made sure the overseas worker would receive the same pay as British workers. He added that overseas workers seemed well informed about pay and conditions and they rarely got complaints (*Streatham News* 7/12).

Overseas doctors

The General Medical Council is preparing new rules for overseas doctors because of the alleged number of complaints about overseas doctors in accident and emergency departments and the standard of their clinical competence. The new rules for these doctors will demand the equivalent experience of a pre-registration year's work, six months in surgery and a demonstration of ability to deal with British patients (*Star* 16/11).

Indian engineers

The 28 engineers brought from India by

a Wolverhampton firm were needed because of a countrywide shortage of qualified engineers, Employment Under-Secretary Dudley Smith told Mr. Enoch Powell in reply to his query about their employment. Mr. Smith said the jobs had been widely advertised in this country before the men were brought from India (*Express & Star* 21/12).

Ford acted wrongly

An independent inquiry has ruled that Ford wrongly dismissed Mr. Winston Williams, a West Indian worker at their Dagenham works, who allegedly threatened a foreman with a metal bar and whose dismissal led to a two-week strike last September. Management, the foremen and the shop-floor workers have accepted the report, which ruled that Mr. Williams was wrong to threaten the foreman but that management was wrong to have sacked him for this, and he should be reinstated (*Daily Telegraph* 14/12).

Pickets comments

'Anybody who had anti-Asian views before this is having to change his views', said Mr. Sid Norris, standing on the picket line outside Lyons Greenford food manufacturing factory where white and Asian workers have been on strike together. 'All the coloured ladies are out on strike with us', added another picket. The strike began when 300 walked out over the management's threat to dismiss a worker and a convenor unless they agreed to transfer to another department (Morning Star 13/12).

Housing

Tenants on some older Greater London Council estates believe that vacant flats are being filled with 'problem and immigrant families'. This is one of the findings of the Northern District Housing Committee chairman Maureen Harwood, after visiting tenants leaders on 48 estates in her area. She told the leaders that she thought their fears unfounded but would investigate the matter (*Evening Standard* 17/12).

Records don't discriminate

Hammersmith crc executive committee claims that a disproportionate number of black families are being housed in unsatisfactory housing estates like Fulham Court. The executive, reporting to a crc meeting, said: 'The borough council denies our charge, although their refutation cannot be backed with evidence because they 'do not discriminate' in their records... There will be no progress without a greater willingness on everybody's part to listen to those who feel they are the victims of injustice.' The crc approved the report (*Fulham Chronicle* 30/11).

Police and Courts

It is wrong for court cases against immigrants to be dropped because they return to their homeland, Bradford magistrate Clifford Hall said at the city court. 'These chaps reappear', he said, 'I think it is totally wrong that if they just hop out of the country for a short time they can escape liabilities.' He was hearing an application from the prosecution that four motoring offences against an immigrant be withdrawn as he had returned to Pakistan. The prosecution told Mr. Hall that in some cases people could be prosecuted on their return (*Yorkshire Evening Post* 19/12).

Recruiting campaign

Local immigrant leaders have welcomed the Mid Anglia Police's campaign to recruit coloured men and women to the force. At present there are no immigrant police (*Peterborough Evening Telegraph* 12/12).

Black sergeant

The man who became Birmingham's first coloured policeman in 1966 has been promoted to sergeant (*Birmingham Evening Mail* 26/11).

Informal approach

Lounge-suited police officer's have been issued with a three-bedroomed house in Handsworth, Birmingham and have sent out 'drop-in-for-a-chat' invitations to the local multi-racial population in a new drive to improve the police role in the area. These informal surroundings are supposed to take over from the official police counter for dealing with advice on community topics. Chief Inspector Shelley said: 'The last thing we want is for people to imagine it is solely a clearing house for complaints about the police... But we shall turn no-one away and ensure that these cases are referred on to be dealt with according to the laid down procedure of the force' (Birmingham Evening Mail 23/11).

Community police

Two Leicester policemen are leaving their panda cars and going back on the beat in the Belgrave Road area. The men are to be known as community police and as such should get to know all the community leaders. The policemen are expected to pick up Asian languages and back up their service with leaflets explaining the role and 'encouraging immigrants to get to know their local bobby' (*Leicester Mercury* 30/11).

'A turn for the better'

Lionel Morrison writes that friction and tension in police-black relations have been considerably reduced in some key London boroughs over the past year. According to Lewisham crc Asquith Gibbes, the situation has 'taken a turn for the better'. In Brixton

black community workers and senior police officers have started weekly liaison meetings and as a result Courtney Laws (director of Brixton Neighbourhood Community Association) says: 'We have a situation where queries are quickly answered and where we can bring to the notice of the police complaints which incidentally have not increased of late'. Laws also said that the special patrol group, which had been criticised for its conduct in black areas, has not been so active lately (*Evening Standard* 6/11).

More effort needed

There are only two coloured policemen in the Wandsworth division but now special emphasis is being placed on attracting immigrants into the force. Lionel Davies of the local crc thinks that the police need to make a greater effort. He said: 'Although relations between police and immigrants have been improved in recent years, there still exists a great deal of tension and suspicion' (*Balham & Tooting News & Mercury* 30/11).

All-white jury challenged

A plaintiff in a libel case, Guyanan Herbert Michael, challenged the all-white jury as it was being sworn in at Exeter Crown Court, saying he wanted at least six black jurors. Mr. Justice Latey said he had no right to challenge the jury in a civil court and to have an all-coloured or half-white and half-coloured jury would be contrary to the random selection of jurors as set out under the law. He said that Michael could challenge individual jurors if he had good reason for believing them to be prejudiced. The plaintiff said he could not go on with the case but would appeal against the judge's decision (*Express & Echo* 12/12).

Immigration

A Private Member's Bill to remove the element of retrospection in the Immigration Act 1971 was introduced by Lord Avebury and given a first reading (*Daily Telegraph* 29/11).

41 percent down

The latest immigration figures show 'that the Government's repeated claims that immigration is being cut are justified', writes Peter Cole. During the first nine months of 1973, the number of Commonwealth immigrants was 41 per cent lower than for the same period in 1972 (30 per cent if Ugandan Asian evacuees are excluded) (*Guardian* 5/12).

Commons debate

Further measures to clamp down on 'this evil trade' of illegal immigration were announced by the Home Secretary in the House of Commons. At the same time he claimed a 'dramatic reduction both in numbers and future commitments on immigration into Britain'. He said that

Under Secretary David Lane would visit India, Bangladesh and Pakistan early in 1974 'to assess the situation' (*Liverpool Daily Post* 7/12). While there Lane is to discuss what steps can be taken to attack illegal immigration and check on procedures for getting entry certificates to ensure, for example, that only genuine dependants are being issued with certificates. Mr. Carr also announced that Urban Aid would be increased by £6 million over the next three years — the amount that would probably have gone to Uganda in aid 'if circumstances there had been different'. For the opposition, Mr. Roy Jenkins agreed that relatively lower immigration figures made the problem easier to handle, but that in some cases the price for the limited reduction could be too high — for example, split Ugandan Asian families, and the 'fish-net' police hunts for illegal immigrants (*Guardian* 7/12).

Entry delays 'inhumane'

MP John Fraser told the Commons of the 'inhumane, harsh and unconscionable' delay metered out to Pakistanis entitled to enter Britain. He quoted cases of women, entitled to join their husbands, who were being kept waiting for a year for an interview to present their papers. It was a standard occurrence for a person with a valid entitlement to wait two years for an entry certificate (*Guardian* 27/11).

Illegal immigration

The Home Secretary is to be asked by a deputation led by Camden MPs why he has ignored a request from the borough's crc for a full enquiry into police raids on immigrant communities (supposedly seeking illegal immigrants). The police has followed raids on Whitfield street with further raids in Westminster. Cllr. David Offenbach said the raids were attacks on communities and that the police had no search warrants and may even have exceeded the wide powers available under the Immigration Act (*Islington Gazette* 30/11).

Ugandan Asians

The Uganda Resettlement Board recommended that it be dissolved at the end of January 1974, and the Home Secretary has approved this (*Glasgow Herald* 8/12). Only 40 families are now living in the URB's resettlement centre at West Malling in Kent, and permanent housing should soon be available for them. The URB estimates that 85 per cent of Ugandan Asians capable of employment have now got jobs (*The Times* 8/12).

A row is building up between the Government and welfare organisations and the Community Relations Commission about the quality of care for the sick, mentally disturbed and aged among the Ugandan Asian refugees. The Home

Office says that, like other immigrants, they should rely on the support of existing social services. The welfare groups argue that the refugees' case is a special one, needing help. At a meeting, the URB, on behalf of the Home Office, turned down requests for special assistance and said the task would be handled by the Home Office's Community Development Department which will 'ginger up' local authorities to provide help in cases of hardship. Lewis Donnelly, chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee for the Welfare of Evacuees from Uganda, said that every director of social services he has spoken to said that they could not cope with their traditional problems let alone the Ugandan Asians. Mr. Mark Bonham Carter, CRC chairman, apparently still hopes to convince the Home Office that race relations workers not civil servants are the best people to help the refugees (*Sunday Times* 9/12).

Passport protest

A batch of more than 260 passports was sent to the Home Office by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in protest against their owners' lack of settled status in Britain. The owners are mainly Ugandan Asians. Mr. V Sharma said that the Home Office was refusing them permanent status which caused difficulties in finding work and mortgages and meant their families could not join them. JCWI estimates that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 people in Britain whose passports are stamped with conditions although they have no other country to go to (*Guardian* 8/12).

Foreign students

A claim by Home Secretary Robert Carr that some foreign students exploit a loophole in the 1971 Immigration Act by spinning out their courses for more than five years to qualify for residence was disputed by educational and student organisations. National Union of Students' officer Tessa Woodward said they had no evidence to back Carr's claim, and that discrimination against foreign, particularly coloured, students, would make such a dodge expensive, unattractive and uncertain. A spokesman for the British Council said that the remedy lies with the Home Office. If permission to stay were granted it would be difficult to see where the abuse lay (*Daily Telegraph* 8/12).

According to Mr. Mihir Gupta, a spokesman for the Indian Association, Indian students are being 'harassed and hindered' out of taking up their courses at Birmingham's two universities. Students who have secured places on courses were having entry permits delayed or refused. A spokesman for the Home Office said that no clampdown had been imposed on any immigrant students (*Birmingham Evening Mail* 22/11).

FURTHER READING

Farrukh Dhondy's article

McNeal, Julia & Rogers, M., *The Multi-racial School: a professional perspective*, Penguin, 1971.

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Great Britain, House of Commons, *Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration. Report on Education, Vol. 1*, London, H.M.S.O.

The Black Liberator, Vol. 1, No. 1.

Freedom News (Voice of the Black Workers' Movement), available in the

Institute of Race Relations' library. *Teaching London Kids*, published by London Association for the Teaching of English.

Farrukh Dhondy, 'Overtly Political Focus', *Times Educational Supplement*, 2.11.73.

The Lambeth Teacher (bulletin of Lambeth NUT) issues 1 and 2. See 'Wages for schoolchildren' by Farrukh Dhondy, and 'The Political Meaning of Vandalism in Schools' by Barry Simmer.

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Ball, C. & M., *Education for Change*.

Freire, Paulo, *Cultural Action for Freedom*.

Dalla Costa, M. & James, S., *The Power of*

Women and the Subversion of the Community, Bristol, Falling Wall Press, 1972.

Bowker, Gordon, *Education of Coloured Immigrants*, Longmans, 1968.

School of Barbiana, *Letter to a teacher*, Penguin, 1970.

Helen Lowe's article

Rodinson, Maxine, *Israel and the Arabs*, Penguin, 1973.

John, Robert & Hadawi, Sami, *The Palestine Diary*, Palestine Research Centre, Labanon, 1970.

Odell, Peter R., *Oil and World Power*, Penguin, 1972.

James, C.L.R., *State Capitalism and World Revolution*.

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refining industry to strengthen its own campaign.

Those of us who support development in the Third World, and are angered by the complacency of the rich, inward looking West, would certainly wish to see a situation in which developing countries were in a position to determine their own trade relationships; we believe however that the first stage in breaking the dominance of the West is to attack import barriers. The Caribbean should not lose a market it already has; the continued import of Caribbean sugar by Europe provides revenue to the Caribbean that would otherwise be going into the pockets of rich Europeans. Certainly, continuance of the present situation is not a long-term solution, with European refineries reaping most of the profits from cane sugar — there should be no illusions about Tate & Lyle. Of course wealth must be redistributed in countries such as those of the Caribbean, which may well mean nationalisation by governments independent of political manipulation by the West. This is for the people of those countries to bring about. However I am sceptical of a revolution that aims to destroy existing industries — how would Mr. Stephens realistically 'reorganise the entire economy'.

I would like to quote from a recent interview with Mr. Norman Girwar, President of the Caribbean Cane Farmers' Association. He points out that 'of all crops produced here in the Tropics... none of them gives a higher income per acre than does sugar cane' and, on the consequences of denying access to the EEC of Commonwealth Sugar, 'there would be mass unemployment. There would be no opportunities for these people now in sugar to be employed elsewhere... I believe that the social distress which would result would certainly not redound to the credit of the countries which imposed it on us. In the eyes of the world I think they would be seen as people just interested in themselves.'

It is this self-interest which we in WDM are attacking.

David Whiting,
14 Healey Wood Crescent,
Brighouse, Yorks.

Libraries and Racism

Sir,

I do not know the name of the 'professional librarian' who wrote in your issue of October/November 1973, sheltering as he/she does behind the shield of anonymity. I would suggest as prescribed reading to their writer an elementary textbook on annotation, which might produce more helpful comments than 'Rubbish', 'Hopelessly out of date', etc. Such comments are not really much help to the potential reader.

I should like to know on what grounds he/she bases the comment that Butterworth & Kinnibrough's book is 'misinformed'.

A. Rowberry,
Deputy Librarian,
Central Library,
Snow Hill,
Wolverhampton.

Readers might like to note that the Chief Librarian of Wolverhampton's Central Library is Mr. F Mason, whose article on 'Library Service to Immigrants', quoted in 'A Poverty of Thinking' in the October/November issue of Race Today, discussed the 'dubious qualifications, incomprehensible English and... pantomime costume' of the Asian applicants for a library post. Is the librarian's craft more important than the people his craft is designed for?

Overseas Qualifications

Sir,

In the course of my work I often hear employers state that overseas qualifications, particularly Indian degrees, are not worth the paper they are written on. This leads all too frequently to black workers being under-employed. I am sure the number of Indian and Pakistani graduates working in the Civil Service as clerical assistants is very considerable. On my visits to employers I have seen an Indian graduate employed as a messenger, and many others working in junior clerical positions.

I recently asked the Department of

Education and Science for an idea of how they compare overseas qualifications with British ones. They referred me to the Schools Council and I received a most unhelpful and vague reply. The University Council for College Admissions (the central processing body for University applicants) does not match overseas and British qualification itself but leaves it to each University to make its own decision. The mind boggles at the amount of inequity and mismatching that must go on. The Department of Employment are also not able to advise employers in detail about overseas qualifications.

If the British Medical Council can devise a system for comparing overseas medical qualifications with those here I am sure the D.E.S. could do the same.

Until the D.E.S. lays down in far greater detail the value of overseas qualifications employers and others will be able to disregard them and continue to underemploy many thousands of black workers without fear of embarrassment.

Further information on this subject would aid us in our campaign.

Jeff Stevens, Employment Officer
Camden Committee for Community Relations
25 Euston Road
London NW1

Free Martin Sostre

Sir,

After reading in the September issue of *Race Today* the column on the Black Puerto Rican, Martin Sostre, who at present has spent 6 years in solitary confinement in several US prisons, I wrote away for more information and am appalled at what is happening. I urge people to do all they can for Sostre who had the courage to stand up for his political views, and who is carrying on this struggle, for the rights of fellow prisoners, even now. Write to: The Martin Sostre Defence Committee, Box 839, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, New York, 14025, USA.

Miss V. Rogers,
17, Gillingham Road,
Cricklewood Lane,
London NW2 1RL

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Details and application forms returnable by January 15, 1974, from the Education Officer (CEC5), the County Hall, London, SE17PB. (Stamped addressed foolscap envelope.)

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If you are interested or would like further details, write to V. Sharma, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 233 Pentonville Road, London, N1.

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

A loving foster home is needed for a sister and brother of West Indian origin, aged 6 and 4 years preferably in London or the Home Counties. If you feel you can offer long-term care to these children, please write to the Director of Social Services (ref. 4/EJM), 38, Craven Park Road, London, NW10.

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For further details please write to: Miss B. Ward, 38 Lewisham Way, New Cross, London SE14 6NP.

PUBLICATIONS

A HISTORY OF INDIANS IN GUYANA by Dwarka Nath, M.B.E., F.R. Hist. S. Second revised edition, UK £2.50, USA \$6.50 post free. Obtainable from the Author, 30 Crowther Road, South Norwood, London SE25.

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CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the March issue is Thursday 31 January.

Every Tuesday
8.30 p.m.

Black Voices: a politico-cultural platform for artists, poets and speakers from the Third World, at: The Troubadour, 265 Old Brompton Road, London, SW5. Admission free.

January

1 - 12 7.30 p.m. except Mondays

Anansi and Brer Englishman - a pantomime at the Dark and Light Theatre. Tickets 55p and 66p; children 33p and 44p; special rates for parties, from the Dark and Light Theatre, Knatchbull Road, London, SE5. Tel: 01-274 4070.

10 and every Thursday 6 - 8 p.m.

Dressmaking Class with emphasis on free hand cutting, At the Africa Centre, King Street, London, WC2. Cost £1 for the term.

15 5.45 p.m. onwards

Sangheet Sargham - the Indian Students' Association presents the fourth talent contest of dance, drama, music and singing with guest artists, to be held at Featherstone Secondary School, Western Road, Southall, Middlesex. Application to enter and tickets (30p) from 50, High Street, Southall, Middx.

17 to 10 February

Contemporary Makonde Sculpture, exhibition of carvings at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London, W8 6NQ.

28 and every Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday till 3 April

Community Studies for Women, a course leading to a certificate in community studies which is recognised by Further Education Colleges in lieu of formal qualifications. Course looks at Social Change in Africa, etc. Fee including books £20. For further details, write to Course Organiser, Africa Centre, King Street, WC2.

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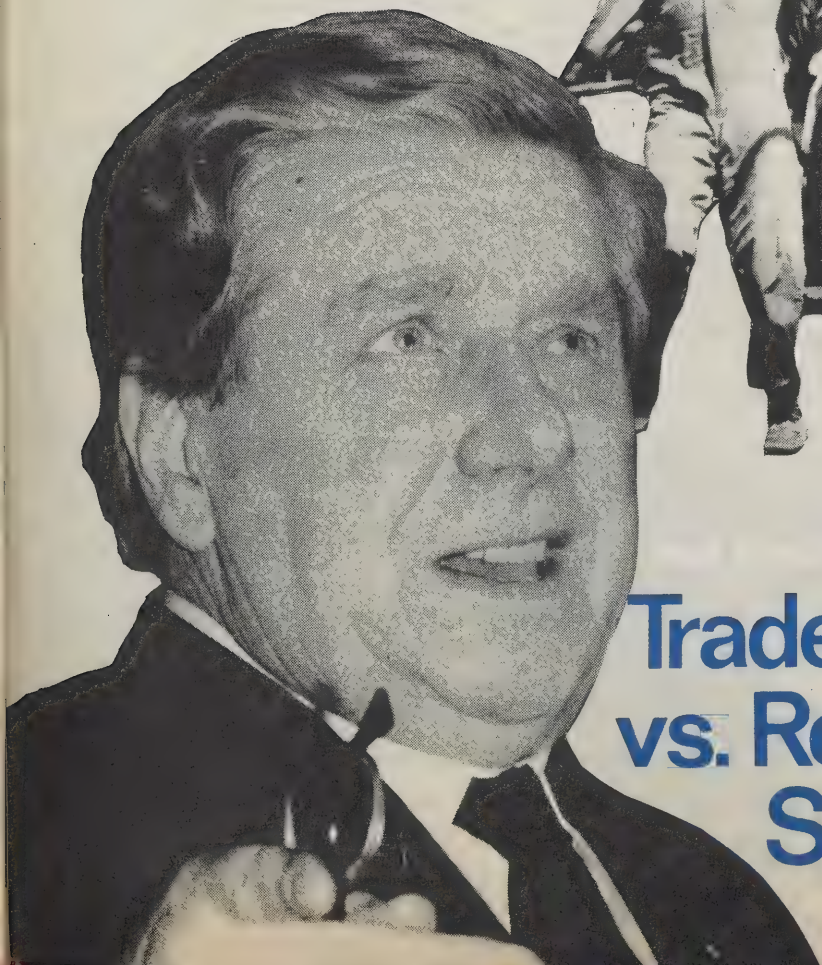
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Race Today

March 1974 Tar-Pence



**Trade Unionism
vs. Revolution in
South Africa**

LETTERS

Police complaints

Sir,

Chris Bunyan's interesting statistics (see last month's *Race Today*) demonstrate that Sir Robert Mark's clean-up of the Metropolitan Force has had more to do with public relations than with reform. It is unfortunate since the number of complaints against the Metropolitan Force is rising dramatically. The number of recorded complaints in 1970 stood at 4,898; by 1972 the figure had risen to 5,564, an increase of 29 per cent. The Metropolitan Force receives a disproportionately higher number of complaints than other police forces in England and Wales, yet in spite of the efforts of the much publicised A10 Division, the number of complaints substantiated stands at 6.1 per cent in the Metropolitan Force as compared with 11.1 per cent in the rest of England and Wales.

The rejection by the local council and the local community relations council of the police investigations into the raids on immigrant homes in Camden is merely one example of the inadequacy of the existing procedure. In spite of this, from leaks in the national press, it appears that the Home Office Working Party set up by Robert Carr to review the complaints procedure will recommend nothing more than a machinery for the dismissal of 'frivolous and vexatious complaints' and a powerless *ex post facto* review. In other words, Sir Robert Mark will have succeeded in presenting more window dressing while leaving police control over complaints procedure virtually unchallenged. The Home Office Working Party contained no independent representation and, as far as is known, took no evidence from independent bodies outside police authorities and the police force.

It is a missed opportunity at a time when police/community relations are going from bad to worse.

Martin Loney
General Secretary
National Council of Civil Liberties
186 King's Cross Road
London WC1.

Less specialised language please

Sir,

We of the Manchester Towards Racial Support Group wish to congratulate the *Race Today* staff on the continuing and, indeed, improving quality of the magazine. It is fulfilling an important need — the political education of the various groups of people opposed to racism and exploitation and the development of a framework of analysis which will lead to the development of correct strategies.

There is one point we feel we should make, because it has grown out of the feedback we have received from *Race Today* readers in Manchester. That is, care must be taken by the editorial staff that the think pieces, which are in themselves complex, could be made less difficult if written in simpler, less specialised language. But this does not mean that we wish to shirk the responsibility we have of grappling with the issues that affect our society.

Manchester TRJ Support Group

Campaign against Asians

Sir,

It appears in the last few months that the authorities in the Southall area have started a campaign to enforce small and petty little laws and by-laws, even at the cost of creating a situation of confrontation. Perhaps this is the way of heralding the introduction of Sir Keith Joseph's 'little experiment' in this area (asking Asians for passports before National Insurance cards are issued).

So far the incidents, which have gone unnoticed by the press, may be small, but in an area like Southall, a community which rarely complains publicly, they are very important. Firstly, during the *Nav Ratri*, a religious festival for the Gujarati community lasting nine days, the police enforced licensing laws even when no alcohol was being consumed on the premises. The hall used was part of a public house, but had a separate entrance and had been used in previous years with no police interference. This time children under 16 were not allowed in, thus forcing whole families to leave the festival. The complaints took days to resolve and it left a big section of the community very bitter. At the same time the police forced the Gujarati community to close premises early, on the pretext of 'complaints

from neighbours'. At the Dominion Cinema, owned by the Indian Workers' Association, the public has been asked by the police to show their membership cards and guests were asked to leave.

Secondly, the violence against the Asian children outside and inside the school by organised gangs is on the increase. The complaints from the parents, who are reluctant to make these officially to the police and the education department, only get this reply in the final analysis: 'We can't help it, we are doing our best.'

Thirdly, the Indian Students' Association put on a very big cultural event which would have gone beautifully had not the Borough officials devised a number of technicalities which appeared to 'block' the event. Though the event was ultimately held, the Principal Youth Officer used the fire regulations to turn away hundreds of people including judges, participants, helpers and the press when there were more than a hundred seats available inside. This insulting treatment at the door has compounded the bitter feeling in the community.

All I ask is, is this the shape of things to come? Or are the incidents in Southall against the Asian community an isolated case?

Mr. H.S. Sohal,
Southall,
Middlesex.

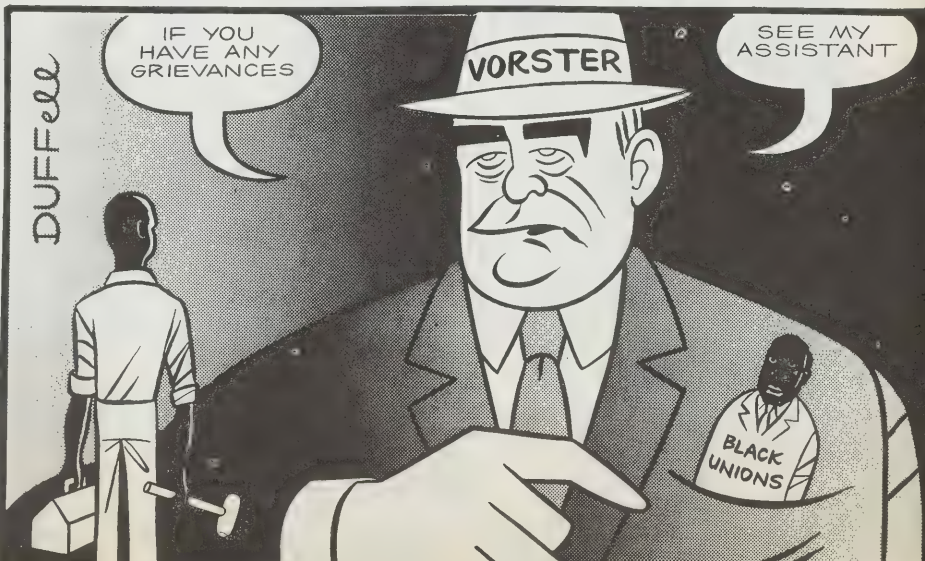
Socialist Press shown up

Sir,

Here is a cheque for £1.60 for a year's subscription.

My congratulations on your excellent publication — it is a pity that much of the socialist press is put to shame by comparison, in scope, coverage, etc.

Chris Whytehead,
2 Saville Place
Clifton, Bristol 8.



EDITORIAL

Bringing It All Back Home

With the military presence in Northern Ireland, frigates on the way to Grenada, troops and police mobilised to attack the miners, the British State has openly committed itself to an armed conflict against the rebellious masses under its hegemony. Not since 1926 has the white section of the British working class faced such a test of strength.

We make the distinction between white and black because to the immigrant sections of the working class, the violence and brutality of imperial rule are not new experiences. Added to the colonial experience is a new dimension - the major confrontations between black people and the police in the urban centres of Britain. The Mangrove and Metro confrontations, Shepherd's in Brixton, the siege of the Holloway Road police station are events which have informed the collective consciousness of the black community. Much of what has gone down in the colonies - Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Brixton, Handsworth and Notting Hill - has been concealed from the indigenous working class. The Movement for Colonial Freedom, the Communist Party, the Labour Party and a whole array of social democrats have managed to label the struggles of colonial workers against British capital as foreign, thereby denying the white working class valuable experiences.

This in turn has led to a dangerous misconception of the nature of the police and the army. Somehow the British police are different (the myth of the nice bobby); the army is the repository of good British gentlemanship; the courts, if carefully handled, can administer impartial British justice.

We are not advocating the argument that the white working class has no understanding or grasp of the nature of the police and the army, but, because of their relative strength and organised power, they have not for decades had to face the full implications of naked State power. To some degree, what has been taking place in Ireland has served to illuminate those minds which have for 50 years been befogged by liberal misconceptions of justice. The present confrontation threatens to bring it all back home.

The choices open to capital today are limited. The miners will certainly vote for a strike. We are told that Commander Gerrard, author of the military operations at Heathrow and the police mobilisation at the Mangrove demonstration, is set to launch his counter offensive. Mining communities have refused to be intimidated. When informed by the *Financial Times* reporter that a violent confrontation is inevitable, a Yorkshire miner merely shrugged his shoulders: 'So what!'

It is a fight between capital and the working class. Not simply British capital. Rest assured that Edward Heath has consulted Ford International, Chrysler and the Pentagon. Should the Government go for the confrontation, it would be taking on the British working class with the full consent and on behalf of international capital. Should they decide against it, it is because at this stage they calculate they cannot win. Then they will pay the miners what is demanded, and thereafter seek to extract the cost from the rest of us. In so doing, they will have the weight of the TUC on their side. As always, they will pick on those sections they deem the weakest. In that event, black workers and women are likely targets. The struggle being waged by Asian workers to work less, the refusal of young blacks to enter the haunts of immigrant labour are movements within the working class which are likely to come under more intense attack.

There is an increasing tendency within the white working class to take on the British State. This is a new development and a movement away from social democratic solutions. This movement gives added strength to the possibilities open to the 'weaker' sections of the class. To draw upon that strength there is an urgent need to accelerate the tendency towards self-organisation, indicating that we too are prepared to take on the British State.

Darcus Howe

Race Today

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BETWEEN THE LINES

Socialist Worker



The Union and the Police

Some twenty Asian pickets stand huddled together in freezing cold weather outside Coventry Art Castings on the Caldwell Road industrial estate in Nuneaton. A van load of police officers is parked permanently in the siding opposite. A nattily-dressed white male saunters across the street approaching the picket line. He is wearing a champagne-coloured suit with tie, shoes and socks to match. His hair is well groomed. 'Alright lads, is everything going well?' He says a few words about a meeting later in the evening — he seems in a hurry to leave. He talks also about a meeting with the police and that 'things in general are moving slowly'. He is gone in five minutes. He is the trade union official on whom the workers are depending to make the strike official. The workers appear disappointed. They murmur grumbles of disapproval, for it has been five years since they organised themselves in the die shop of Coventry Art Castings and conceded their organisation to the trade union bureaucrats. Their purpose then was that through the trade union structure they would be able to draw to their side other organised workers in the union movement. At the crucial moment, the Transport & General Workers' Union has not produced the goods. This is the black working-class experience which is repeating itself in industry after industry in Britain.

Coventry Art Castings is one of the four shops which comprise the total A.L. Dunne operation which produces car components for Ford's, Chrysler, Morris Engines and Standard Triumph. The process of producing car components begins in the die shop where the metal is melted and the castings are moulded. Within the die shop are four grades of workers: furnace men, labourers, knockers out and die casters. The furnace men and the labourers have been working 80 hours a week for a living wage. The knockers out 60 hours and the die casters 42 hours.

The furnace men, labourers and knockers out are all Asian. There are Asian die casters, but all the whites in the shop are to be found amongst the die casters. Once the castings leave the die shop, they go through different processes until the final component is produced. Follow the castings and you will find that as it leaves the die shop, the skin colour of the workers changes, and the wages to correspond.

Five years ago the Asian workers organised themselves and joined the T&GWU — all of them. On 3 December 1973 the Asian workers called a ban on overtime as management refused to negotiate over the demand for higher wages. For the Asians, higher wages means that they would have to work less. Their demands have encompassed a shorter working week — 40 hours instead of 60 and 80. In fact, they were determined to break the wage differential between themselves and white workers. On 6 December management dismissed a shop steward and every Asian walked out; the whites stayed in. Management issued dismissal notices to all strikers and began recruiting scabs. The workers drew up picket lines in front of the factory. The police were called in and to date nine pickets have been arrested. The Asians arrested were asked to show their passports to prove that they weren't illegal immigrants.

Up till now the strike has not been made official by the union, hence no strike pay. And hence there is little possibility of having the components blacked by auto workers at Chrysler, Ford's, Standard Triumph and Morris Engines. To avoid the consequences of the picket, management has been having its deliveries made at the Newenbridge plant, from whence it is moved to Art Castings by management-owned lorries. Work previously done at Coventry Art Casting is being shifted to Newenbridge also.

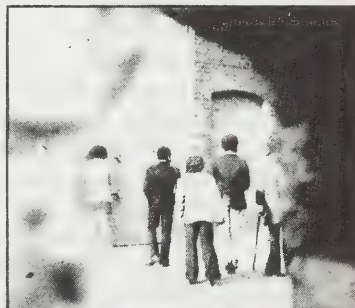
The strikers draw strength from their community. The Indian Workers' Association has contributed financially and their close community ties make a great deal of subsidising possible. Against them are ranged the police and the trade union bureaucracy. Powerful forces they are, but not invincible.

Child Labour in Lambeth

The story in last month's issue about the young children in North Lambeth who are being employed to work as labourers in a small plastics factory when they should have been at school has provoked interesting developments. Readers will remember that just before Christmas, a *Race Today* reporter saw five young children enter the premises at 109 Randall Road, Arches, just after lunch. Later, we entered the factory with an adult witness, and saw some of the children at work. When we returned at five o'clock, the children, some still in school blazers, left the premises and later returned for the evening shift.

Since then, some more of the children have come forward and spoken to us. They claim that the youngest children were not eleven, as we stated, but eight and nine, and that the work was rather more varied than we implied — among other tasks, they spent some of their time wrapping sexy books in plastifoil so they would not get dog-eared in the Soho porn-shops. One of the 14-year-olds took a couple of titles from an eight-year-old because he 'thought they went a bit far' — they were called *Sexual Adventures* and *Foto Love*.

The children also claim that they weren't allowed to talk to each other while working, that Mr. Gregory threatened



Flashback to February *Race Today*: children entering Plasti-pack in December.

them with the back of his hand but wouldn't take on the older ones because they hit him back, and that on one occasion, some boxes fell off the fork-lift truck onto some of the children. Luckily they weren't seriously hurt; working without cards or insurance they would have been ruined for life if anything had happened.

Since the report was published, ILEA schools in the vicinity claim to have tightened up on truancy: Archbishop Temple's have now started calling the register at every lesson to check that all pupils are there, and the Education Welfare Office has set up an investigation into some of the children's activities. Interestingly, ILEA had already looked into allegations of child labour at Mr. Gregory's premises: in February 1972, ILEA inspectors visited Plastipack but were denied access to the premises (the children say that he hid them all in the toilet whenever anyone in authority came round). Unable to see anything round a concealing tarpaulin to the inside of the building, the men from ILEA gave Mr. Gregory a copy of the regulations about child labour and went away again.

The Factory Inspectorate, too, claim to be investigating the premises, but say that they need corroborative evidence — 'We've got a lot of other things to do besides this one', said Mr. Jenkins, the Senior Factory Inspector for South London. The Inspectorate have a difficult job observing the factory because of the ripples our story set up (Mr. Gregory is not talking to anyone at the moment), but the speed of the Inspectorate's investigation can be judged from the way that despite the fact *Race Today* exposed the story at the beginning of January, and that at the same time we sent a copy to their office to inform them. A fortnight later they still hadn't asked us if we could help with any evidence by the time we went to press.

The police are also looking into the activities at the Arches: Superintendent Paddon of the Kennington police station said that he was looking into the activities of a 'certain firm in the Vauxhall area'. He is just as much interested in what is being produced as he is in who is working there, but at present can say no more than that investigations are going on.

The children meanwhile claim that Mr. Gregory has seen them and said that they can go back to work when the fuss dies down: with the speed with which authority appears to be investigating his factory, that will probably be any minute now.

Mr. Briggs

In an article about the National Front in Huddersfield in the October 1971 issue of *Race Today* it was suggested that Mr. John Briggs, a member of the National Front, is a Fascist and that his conduct as a Notary Public in witnessing immigrants' signatures to Sponsorship Declarations was hypocritical.

We now accept that Mr. Briggs is not and never has been a Fascist and that his conduct as a Notary Public was in no way hypocritical. We apologise to Mr. Briggs for the suggestions to the contrary in our article. At the same time we should make it clear that *Race Today* remains as opposed as ever to the policies of the National Front.



Eight Week Struggle Against Lockout

'It's a matter of principle', said Akbar Khan, 'if we accept it, this will happen all over the country'. He was discussing the continuing struggle of the 70 Asian workers who have been locked out of the Perival Gutterman yarn-producing factory in Greenford Middlesex. The dispute is now entering its ninth week, and the men are as solid as they were at the beginning.

Out of the total Asian work-force who came out at the end of November, only two have been forced to move to other employment by their enforced poverty: none of the men are receiving strike pay from their union, despite the fact that the T&GWU has made the strike official. And few of them are receiving payments from the Department of Health and Social Security. Married men get a pittance — one man with a wife and family of four is receiving the total of £15.00 a week, including rent — and the single men receive nothing at all. Khan is typical, he lives on the support of his friends, who are contributing free food stuffs and heating materials. A recent social at the Dominion Cinema in Southall raised £150 for the men, but that sum does not go far or last long.

The dispute is over a management plan to massively step up production before Christmas without increasing the bonus rates (see the report in February 1974 *Race Today*). Production is now running at least 70 per cent of normal with the factory recruiting scab labour. The Department of Employment continues to send men down to the factory despite a request from the Transport and General to observe the picket line: now many of the employees are white or West Indian, and Perivale Gutterman claim to be satisfied with the level of production.

There has been little practical support from the Union, nor from the surrounding factories, including the massive Hoover works a mere quarter of a mile away. One factory opposite had a small whip round for the strikers, but apart from that there has been neither financial support, nor moral support on the picket

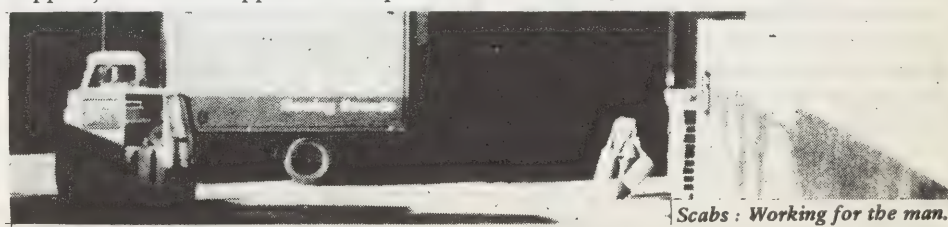
line. Deliveries continue at the modern works, with white drivers crossing the picket lines with impunity.

Three weeks ago, a mass meeting of men turned down a plan to occupy the factory by a majority of two to one: wary of the possibility of 'conspiracy' charges against them, they have stuck to picketing and, on the advice of the T&GWU, they are persisting in fighting for compensation for unfair dismissal through the National Industrial Relations Court. Originally, their hearing was due on the 12 January. Mr. H.P. Vogel, the managing director, successfully applied for a postponement for a further fourteen days. Then, when the 26 January hearing came up, he again applied for a postponement, thus leaving the hearing until well into February. In the meantime, his production continues while the men exist for a further month on nothing.

On 26 January, the men hired a coach and went into Central London to visit Sidney Bidwell and William Molloy, the local MPs at the House of Commons. They also wanted to see Tony Benn, but he was too busy to spare them the time. After asking Reg Prentice to intervene for them as well, they went on and picketed Transport House in an attempt to see Jack Jones. How much of this will pay off when production is running at near normal levels, the Department of Employment is regularly sending labour down, organised labour is bemused by the three-day week and the State now has the Shrewsbury Three verdict to assist in enforcing picketing laws is anybody's guess.

What is not in doubt is the men's determination to struggle and their collective strength: wrapped in scarves and coats against the cold, small change only in their pockets, they maintain the picket line day by day abandoned by their Trade Union and fellow workers.

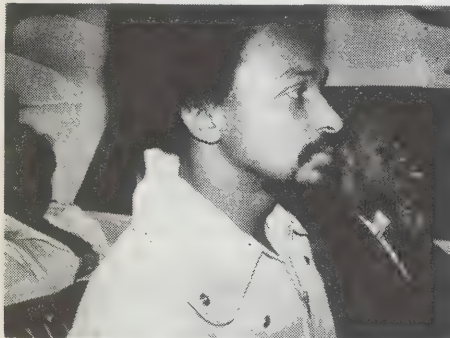
Donations and messages of support to Aslam Khan, 39 Dane Road, Southall, Middlesex.



Scabs: Working for the man.

'Your real aim is to go out and persecute black people', Ranford Allen told the police. He describes to *Race Today* the four hours he was detained at Harlesden police station.

My name is Ranford Lloyd Allen. I am employed as a wireman by GEC in Kenton, Middlesex. On 18 December 1973 I left home at 8 a.m. to go to work. I left work at 4 p.m. and went to my sister-in-law's at Kensal Rise. She was leaving for Jamaica and there was to be a small family gathering at her home that evening. I went and played dominoes and talked.



"They were chatting in the car..."

When I left, I went in my brother-in-law's car taking him, my sister and my nephew to their home at 24 Alric Avenue, Harlesden. We parked outside the house, this was about quarter-to-eleven and we were chatting. I noticed a man walking out of an alleyway walking towards the car. As he got nearer I noticed he was in a uniform (but he did not have a helmet). The police officer told me to get out of the car. I asked why, he said he wanted to ask me some questions. I said by all means ask what you want — he said come out of the car. I then saw a policewoman coming out of the alleyway. I said: 'Look, officer, we were sitting down in this car before any of you came. If you want to ask me questions then go ahead. I won't come out of the car.' He says he wants me out of the car because he heard a crash. He then got out his walkie-talkie and says something. He comes round the side of the car and tries to pull me out, grabbing hold of my hand which is holding the ignition key. My brother in law, who had had a few drinks, wanted to know why the officer was pulling me. Two Panda cars came and I was arrested by two policemen. I asked why I was being arrested and one said: 'Shut your fucking mouth, you black cunt.' I said: 'Where are you taking me?' He said: 'When you get there you will find out.' They took me to the police station. I said to policeman Q80: 'Do you believe in God?' He said: 'No.' I said: 'You are not human — you see ordinary people like me, and you, because you feel superior, you do what you want.'

He says: 'I can do anything I want.' I said: 'You're real aim is to go out and persecute Black people. I know persons who say this has happened to them and I find it hard to believe at first, now I know it is true. It is your job to do this.' When I got to the station I was told that they had sent for a doctor, to take a blood test. This was five-to-eleven, he came at

five-to-three. I said to the officers: 'I know you're good at beating — you can do it because I haven't got witnesses.' One said: 'No, we are not going to beat you.' I said: 'You might as well, you haven't got a case.'

The doctor came, he took a blood sample. The doctor asked me if I was involved in any accident. I said I was not in any accident, man. He said: 'Don't call me man.' I said: 'What should I call you — woman?' He said: 'Most people call me doctor.' I asked the policeman why he has brought me here — he says drunken driving. When I was in the station I was taking down the numbers of the policemen; they would come up and say: 'Have you got mine?', laughing at me. (The numbers were PC 167, Q303, Q67 and the desk sergeant, Q71.) I said to an officer I have a wife and five-month-old child who I left at home this morning. The officer asked for my MOT and insurance for the car. I said: 'I don't drive that car. I got it from my brother-in-law.' I finally arrived home at 3.30.

I received a letter from the police saying my blood-alcohol concentration was below the prescribed limit and that no further action is to be taken in this matter. However, the letter stated that proceedings are being taken against me for not having any insurance.

However, Mr. Allen says his Motor Insurance policy entitles him to drive his brother-in-law's car.

Home Office Labour Camp

The Home Office is well aware of the threat posed by West Indian youth who refuse to work (spelt out by Darcus Howe in the December issue of *Race Today* and by Farrukh Dhondy in the February issue). Community Industry is one of the ways they are attempting to deal with their problem. According to Mr. O'Brien, CI Director in Leeds, the Home Office believes that Chapeltown is nearer racial 'flash-point' than any other black area in the country. But their belief is based on shaky research: they told O'Brien that Chapeltown is somewhere near Barnsley. O'Brien himself refers to our seething hot-bed of racial violence as 'Chapelfield'.

Community Industry ran from September 1971 to March 1972 under the auspices of the National Association of Youth Clubs as an experimental project for 600 youth in eight Northern areas of high unemployment. Its grant was extended, and in February 1973 the Department of Employment raised its financial backing to expand the scheme to 2,000 youth, adding five more areas, one of which is Leeds. Its annual budget is £1,500,000, of which £26,000 is spent in Leeds. CI now has a National Management Board, whose chairman, John Ewen (Director of the National Youth Bureau in Leicester) is appointed by the Secretary of State. The Board has three representatives from the NAYC, two from the DEP, one (David Deuchar) from the CBI and one (Mr. Winnard) from the TUC.

The scheme takes on youth who have

been unemployed for a long time and who have 'physical' or 'social' disadvantages. They are paid (£9.84 per week at 16, £13.42 at 18) to work in the community at jobs like repairing old buildings, painting and decorating, clearing play spaces. They are not trained in a skill.

The official aim of the scheme is to help young people adjust to working life, and to cope with life in general. O'Brien defines his aim in Leeds as 'giving kids an opportunity to find some self-confidence'. He sees CI as being socially oriented as much as job oriented — what interests him most is the casework relationship with the kids.

"They told O'Brien that Chapeltown is somewhere near Barnsley..."

But there is good evidence that people in the Home Office see CI as an agent of social control, attempting to get kids off the streets and into the discipline of work, where their energy and initiative will be drained out of them and their potential for rebellion removed.

In its early phase, CI was working in areas where kids wanted jobs, but where there were no vacancies. Now it is dealing with kids who refuse to work. In Leeds, for instance, it is said that there are 6 to 8 jobs vacant for every unemployed 17-year-old. According to the official view, these people who refuse to work are misfits — subnormal or delinquent.

The argument that these people have acute psychological problems, expressed by their delinquency and inability to hold down a job, is always questionable, but it is obviously wrong when applied to West Indians in Chapeltown. Even the police admit that Chapeltown has the lowest vandalism rate of any working-class area in Leeds. Chapeltown has none of the 'gang warfare' problems we hear about in other parts of Leeds. The local Press has not even managed to create the illusion of mugging, a well-known 'disease' of black youth in other parts of this country.

The Home Office makes no bones about its intention that CI should control black youth. O'Brien has his full complement of 'misfit' youth, but he has been given extra funds to undertake what the Home Office describes as 'an all-out attack on Chapeltown', an area which they say is about to explode.

But O'Brien does not concern himself with the question of why Chapeltown needs Community Industry. He just wants to help kids gain some self-confidence. And he is anxious to get started. His offer of a job was turned down by at least one West Indian, but now he has appointed two young black men, George Phillips and Sonny Fearon, as Project Supervisors. He is now desperate for a team of black youth, and work for them to do. So far he has had no luck. He has a small 'multi-racial' group working in Studley Grange Children's Centre, but they will not have any more. He wants to form a team to build the fence for the Adventure

Playground, but its Management Committee is worried about the implied association with what might be called Home Office agents.

Black youth are not flocking to him either. They know what it's all about. They know that there's more to life than building fences and working in factories. Social workers call them misfits. The Home Office, and the youth themselves, know they are making political choices in their decision not to work.

Ron the Battler

After fourteen years as a night engineering porter at the BBC, and eight attempts at being promoted to the grade of chargehand or supervisor, 42-year-old Ronald Haynes is still battling away with the Corporation for some recognition of his qualities. He reckons that lost promotion opportunities have cost him about £3,000 in foregone wages so far, and a lot more

in mental frustration.

Ron Haynes arrived in Britain in 1958 as a keen young Barbadian tailor: he had big plans and a sense of adventure and for weeks he applied for jobs in the tailoring business. Each time, he would follow up an advert in the evening papers, only to find that the next morning the job had already been taken. For a period, he worked as a waiter at the Constitutional Club in Westminster, and then he worked for the Ministry of Food, humping bags and boxes all day until he was too stiff to move.

In June 1960, he was declared redundant and the Employment Exchange offered him a job with the BBC as a night engineering porter. Ron got the job and for six years worked steadily and conscientiously, moving around the technical equipment, handling the complex machinery of television. In 1961, he had attended a course in technical equipment for the Corporation, and each year his Annual Report would speak in glowing

terms of his punctuality, cooperation and general ability. In June 1966, he was appointed a temporary chargehand, and for eight months he carried out that job to his supervisor's great satisfaction. Eventually, the post was officially advertised, Ron applied and attended his interview (known in the BBC as a 'Board'). The job qualifications demanded were well filled by him — a knowledge of the premises, a knowledge of the equipment and an ability to handle other workers.

So convinced were his mates he would get the position that they opened a sweepstake in the canteen with Ron's name way at the top of the list. When the results came out, they found that the job had gone to a lad with five months experience. General opinion amongst Ron's workmates was that it was an unfair decision, and over the next six years, Ron put in another six applications for supervisory posts. The same thing happened every time: despite a good

DOCK BRIEF

On 18 December 1973 at the Old Bailey, the case of two black youths, both charged with a petty theft, was heard. One was also charged with assault. Gregory Galloway and Rudolph Parris were charged with stealing two books each from Foyles Bookshop. Galloway was also charged with assaulting the store detective while he was assisting a police officer in the execution of his duty. The prosecution claimed that the two men were in Foyles and appeared to be acting suspiciously. The store detective, Brian Dellow, gave evidence that although he did not see the men with any books, he rang the police immediately, and within minutes two car-loads of police arrived. They claimed in court that when searching Parris they found two books on his person. They also claimed that Galloway, in resisting arrest, kicked the store detective twice, in the groin and in the knee. When he was later searched at the station, they claim to have found two books on him.

The defendants denied all the charges and claimed that they were looking for a book on hi-fi equipment, and that when they were searched on leaving the store, nothing was found on them. They allege that the police 'produced' the books at the police station. But before the end of the case, the judge intervened and told the prosecution not to proceed because of the lack of evidence of the theft.

Mr. Len Woodley, defence counsel, then submitted that since there was no case of theft, the officers were not acting 'in the execution of their duty' and therefore, even if Galloway had assaulted the store detective, he could not in law be convicted of assaulting him 'while assis-

ting a police officer in the execution of his study'. However, the judge ruled that the assault charge was a matter for the jury to decide. After twenty minutes of deliberation, the jury acquitted Galloway of the charge.

* * *

Richard Emmanuel, a 21-year-old Jamaican, who lives in Brixton, was charged with robbing Tassaduk Hussain Mirze of a sum of money, and of robbing Millicent Gayle of a sum of money and two rings and her handbag. The charges relate to the following incident:

On 26 July 1973, around midnight, three black youths entered a Kentucky Fried Chicken shop in Lambeth. Two of the youths went over to the manager, Mr. Mirza. One grabbed hold of his throat and put a knife to it, while the other ordered him to open the till and took all the money. Meanwhile, the third youth went up to Mrs. Millicent Gayle, the cashier, and told her not to move, otherwise she would get shot. He robbed her of a wedding ring and an engagement ring. The three then ran out of the shop and the police were called.

On 18 October, almost three months after the incident, at 3.55 p.m. in Brixton Market, Mrs. Gayle saw the defendant Richard Emmanuel. She immediately called the police who came. She sat in the back of the police car and identified Emmanuel as the man who had robbed her of her rings. He was arrested and charged. He denied all knowledge of the incident and asked that Mrs. Gayle be

brought to see him — but the police refused, saying it was not necessary. Emmanuel saw her for the first time in the Old Bailey. The manager, Mr. Mirze, attended an identification parade at Brixton Prison and failed to identify Emmanuel as one of the three men who had robbed his shop.

The case was heard at the Old Bailey on 17 January 1974. Under cross-examination, Mrs. Gayle admitted that she had never seen the defendant before the robbery, and then only for a few seconds, and that when he threatened to shoot her, she had not seen the gun, 'only something in his pocket that pushed out'. In her statement to the police after the robbery, she had described the person who robbed her as wearing black trousers with white stripes and turn-ups. The police failed to find clothes of this description on Emmanuel's premises.

The Defense Counsel submitted to Judge Percival that it was dangerous to leave the case to the jury — because it hinged on Mrs. Gayle's identification of the defendant, which was not reliable — and that he should exercise his discretion and withdraw the case from them. The judge refused, saying it was for the jury to decide. After five hours, the jury returned to say that they could not agree and the judge ordered a re-trial.

In the lower Court the police strongly objected to bail. The magistrates granted bail of two sureties at £250 each. Emmanuel could not produce these guarantors and so was remanded in custody. He has been in prison since his arrest last October, and is still in Brixton Prison awaiting his re-trial. No one else has been arrested in connection with this case.

Annual Report each year, he would get his interview and a couple of weeks later back would come the reply: 'Not successful at this application.' By September 1972, Ron was so angry at his treatment that he complained to the Race Relations Board. The West Metropolitan Conciliation Committee of the Board examined all the evidence, heard Ron's side of the story and pronounced their verdict. In March 1973 the Committee found that there had been unlawful discrimination in the case of Ron Haynes and the BBC.

Ironically even while the investigation had been going on, Ron had once again been Boarded, and once again turned down. For the last twelve months, Ron's case has travelled up and down the BBC hierarchy and in and out of the Board. The BBC have strongly objected to the Conciliation Committee's statement, and the Board have now reopened the investigations.

Inside Television Centre at Wood Lane, Ron goes about his portering business with a cheerful attitude and an angry heart. He has the full support of his work-mates, and now the support of the Association of Broadcasting Staffs. But life in the BBC has been a tapestry of niggling events from management. Perhaps typical of the sort of patronising he has to put up with is this report, written of him by senior engineering manager Colin Fisher on 7 November 1973. Ron was in dispute with one of the supervisory staff about a feeling he had that he was not getting in a fair share of overtime. After an argument he had gone home in disgust and complained about what was going on. This is what Colin Fisher wrote:

I read Mr. Haynes' statement and copied it as follows:

'Mr. Green called me out of the office and he started by telling me that I was on overtime Saturday and I coming in again on Thursday night. He is making sure I don't until another porter refuses. He go on to say that I have cause enough trouble. He is not going to rest until he sees me escorted from the premises. You may think that I am doing this because I am a black man. I said to him, why did you mention black. He said: 'Let's face it, you're not f... ing white are you? It's about time you f... ing pack and go.'

Presumably if Ron had been Scots, the interview would have been written, "I dinna ken the noo" said Mr. Haynes...."

Ron calculates that if he had been promoted in 1966 he would by now have earned an extra £3,000. As it is, he stays where he is and wages his struggle alone. There are other black people working in the BBC now: two people on the 'creative' side of the business as producers, directors, cameramen and so on are quaintly known as black. On the other hand, at least eight of those workers who clean up the toilets are black.

* * *

Next month's BACKLASH section will be around the article by Ken Jordaan on South Africa and the TUC. We welcome our readers' contributions to this continuing feature of debate.



The Platform



The People

The Platform and the People

On 4 November, 1973 the *Sunday Times* reported as follows:

At the end of his first day as head of community relations for the Metropolitan Police Commander Peter Marshall went to the best known black people's pub in London, the Coach and Horses in Brixton, to attend a party given by West Indians to welcome him to his new job. At Thursday night's party for Commander Marshall, he and the area police chiefs ate West Indian food, thrashed out arguments and made friends. When next there is an incident in Brixton, the negotiations are more likely than ever to be between men who respect each other than between antagonistic coppers and immigrants.

Who invited Marshall? That small body of West Indian middle class community relations experts who have been set up as mediators in a mortal conflict between the police and West Indians in Brixton. They are identifiable as part of Sir Robert Mark's chorus group, who constantly repeat their master's tune, 'that black people should join the police force'.

By mid January the stage-managed pact between the West Indian middle class and the police was blown. Two policemen asked Jamaican-born Mr. Chin to move his car. He demurred and was subsequently kidnapped in a Police car and properly beaten. No charges were laid. The facts of Chin's case are not important, for it is a common experience within the black community.

The Black Defence Committee called a public meeting. 150 people attended -

middle aged West Indian workers, men and women, who had smartened up themselves after hurrying from a day's work, to young brothers and sisters, employed and unemployed, who are distinguishable by their readiness to deal blow-by-blow against the police. The mediators occupied the platform almost exclusively.

The mood of the audience was one of anger and hostility which to some degree disciplined the platform: no word of who they would invite next for West Indian food and party talk at the Coach & Horses, no word of black youth joining the police.

The young people spoke up. They said that Chin was a middle-aged businessman - an exception to those who were constantly being beaten up and framed - the young employed and unemployed workers. The older ones agreed. The familiar strategy of separating the youth from their elders looked like receiving a severe setback. In this situation the platform must either give a lead which is informed by the tenor and general feeling of the meeting or on the other hand steer the gathering to a safe position with no risks involved. There is no middle course.

The platform chose the latter and passed some lame and meaningless resolutions. Meaningless in the sense that they were aware that they had no intention of organising the enforcement of the resolutions.

Nothing short of a total mobilisation of the West Indian population will suffice. The police force only understand power.

NEWS BACKGROUND

The Institute Story: The Unacceptable Face...

A. Sivanandan

Even as the Institute of Race Relations is developing new perspectives and functions, it is threatened with closure. The following are extracts from a pamphlet (shortly to be published by TRJ) that relates the Institute to the imperial history that spawned it and shows how the crisis of the Institute's last two years, when the staff began to attack racism and vested interest, lost it the financial backing that it had had before.

The war has been over these last six years – and we have brought our boys back home. But European capitalism lies weak and bleeding: we had to let India go. And we are not going to be able to hold on to our other colonies much longer, not with all the trouble they are giving us. We do not have the coercive power, we do not have the money. Let America have them if she wants to. But as for us, it is time we got out. Let us give the natives their independence before they take it from us by force. Let's bring home our administrators too.

And the sooner we leave, the sooner will we be able to recoup our loss of face. We can tell them that they are now ready for self-government and that is why we are going – that was what we intended all along: we only governed them for their own good, until they came of age. That way at least we can have them on our side.

But we cannot leave it to chance, we must work at it – show them that they are members of a larger, more grown-up family, that their colour makes no difference. Or else, the communists will have them – and then we will have compounded the problem of race with the problem of class.

The motives manifested in this apocryphal speech may well have been the reasons that led up to the inauguration of the future Institute of Race Relations as a department of Chatham House* in 1952. They may have even determined the nature of its future governing board – colonial businessmen and ex-colonial administrators and academics – and its first director, an ex-Indian Civil Service man with vision and a sense of Christian mission. But the speech that made the Institute was in fact made by H.V. Hodson (one-time member of the Government of India Reforms Commission and later editor of the *Sunday Times*) on 4 May 1952 at the Royal Institute of International Affairs and began as follows:

There are two problems in world politics today which transcend all others. They are the struggle between Communism and liberal democracy, and the problem of race relations.

Of the two, I am prepared to argue that the problem of race relations is the more important,

since, for one thing, it would remain with us in its full complexity even if Communism were settled down to peaceful neighbourliness with democracy in a world partitioned between them. But the comparison is really to no purpose. Both problems are of crucial importance for the survival of our civilisation.

Much more to the point is the fact that if the two became identified – that is to say, if Communism succeeded in enlisting most of the discontented or non-European races on its side, so that the frontier between democracy and its enemies was a racial as well as an ideological and political frontier – then the danger would be greatly multiplied, and the chance of our eventually coming out on top would be so much the poorer. To the extent that we solve the racial problem itself, we shall of course be preventing that combination from coming about. On the other hand, the fact that we face the problem in the presence of the Communist menace gives it a double urgency.*

Perhaps because it grew out of the circumstances of a vanishing empire and with an eye to a future when the imperial chickens would come home to roost, the Institute of Race Relations has shown a greater sensitivity (however partial) to events than similar organisations. That sensitivity has been further compounded by the nature of the subject that the Institute was set up to study. For one thing 'race relations' is a constantly changing subject; it never stays still: it moves even as it is captured. For another, it throws the investigator back on himself, questions the self-interest (however subconscious) of his 'objectivity': every observer is a participant and how he participates is already predicated by his history. In the third place, it is not so much a discipline in its own right as a complex of disciplines, and the findings in one field of knowledge often belie the findings in another. For that very reason, 'race relations' demands a holistic rather than a discrete approach, which in its turn points to a re-appraisal of the whole of society, its value systems and its political and economic structure.

But since such an apprehension of social reality is fraught with strategies for change, 'race relations' comprehends both thinking and doing, being and becoming.

An independent Institute of Race Relations, therefore, was bound to be sensitive to its own findings and to seek change, both in society and in its own functions, in respect of those findings. Conversely, it could change nothing if it was not independent.

* * *

It was presumably a similar commitment to non-commitment that involved the Institute in two conferences with the Institute of Strategic Studies in April 1959 and October 1962 on the 'Strategic Importance of Africa'. But the secrecy that shrouded the conferences and the confidentiality of the reports that were privately circulated attest not to the significance of the discussions that took place, but to the importance of the participants: high-ranking military officers, senior civil servants, powerful industrialists, bankers, diplomats and, of course, academics. The only contribution that has any meaning for us today came from the Israeli Military Attaché, Colonel Hiram, who claimed that 'Israel had an advantage over other powers in that African countries felt no historical misgivings towards her'.

* * *

In 1957, Philip Mason, the Director of the Institute, smelling a storm, approached a number of universities with a view to ascertaining their interest in the 'immigrant' question, and received very little encouragement... But not till 1958 when 'race relations' came to Britain in the

* Royal Institute of International Affairs

* In 'Race Relations in the Commonwealth', *International Affairs*, Vol. 26, no. 3, July 1970.

* IRR/ISS, Joint Conference on the Strategic Importance of Africa, held on 16 October 1962.

riots of Notting Hill and Nottingham did the Institute venture into publications on domestic problems The Institute was settling down nicely into its research and information role when the agitation for the control of immigration called for a position. Mason felt that the Institute should take a middle path between the two extremes of a complete ban on entry and unrestricted immigration. The Government was in any case about to take some action. 'In these circumstances', he suggested to the Institute's executive committee in October 1961, 'it seemed that an Institute of Race Relations ought to be concerned that such control should be instituted in as painless a way as possible'. Accordingly, when the Commonwealth Immigrants Act finally became law in June 1962, Mason hoped to alleviate its consequences by serving on the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council.*

Some months later the Institute obtained a grant of £93,500 from the Nuffield Foundation for a five-year study of British race relations under the directorship of E.J.B. Rose, who had been the Director of the International Press Institute.** The Survey of Race Relations in Britain, Mason hoped, would provide 'a Myrdal for Britain while there was still time' and, like Myrdal, would assemble 'a vast mass of information and set the whole in a new and illuminating perspective' and thereby 'help to avoid mistakes'.***

But the planning and foresight that had gone into the Institute's projects on Africa were hardly noticeable in the work of the Survey. The studies on Africa had a clear commitment to neo-colonialism — whether it was intended or not is hardly a question that would interest the colonized. The Institute had defined its position: it was up to the colonized to see beyond its pretensions. The Survey, however, was a horse of a different feather — it evoked that sort of imagery: mixed, confused, mythical. It did not have an ideology, unless liberalism at its extremity could be called an ideology — or rather it had an ideology by default: the bourgeois ideology. All it was devoted to was the empirical, and that devotion would allow it to change its 'principles', its direction, its concern with every wind that the Government blew. That it was a Labour Government made it that much easier on the conscience.

* * *

In the meantime the core of the Institute — Library, *Race Today* and

* A voluntary body appointed by the Home Secretary.

** Rose's press connections are important for an understanding of later events.

*** In 'Ten Years of the Institute', *Race*, Vol. 10, no. 2, October 1968.



"We are determined to cut down sharply the number of fresh entries until this mouthful has been digested." Philip Mason in the *Guardian* 23 January 1965

Publications, the first two in particular — had become united in their desire to secure for the Institute the independence of thought and action that it had lost in the boom period of the race industry. It saw that the Institute had been cast in a role not dissimilar to the role of the straight government bodies, such as the CRC and the RRB, or of the 'independent' bodies such as Runnymede Trust, which had censored Gus John's telling report on Handsworth. The Institute was a buffering institution if not an outright instrument of social control. The 'core' began to question the Institute's relevance to the realities of the day, to the objective situation outside. The time was long gone to speak of the relations between races or of stemming the tide of discrimination; discrimination had become institutionalised — in the executive, the legislature, in the judiciary even. That, at the least, was the incontrovertible evidence of its own work. The only way it could be expressed was through *Race Today*.

* * *

The lunch-hour meetings at which visiting dignitaries and 'experts' were invited to speak, provided some outlet for staff 'bias', but when in attempting to look at both sides of the question the Portuguese Ambassador was given a platform to match that given to Murupa, a FRE-LIMO representative, the unfair 'fairness' of it all drove deeper home. (Ironically, Murupa was later discovered to be a Portuguese 'plant': he might well have been the Portuguese Ambassador — you couldn't get to looking at both sides of the question any closer than that!)

* * *

The Survey's period of office came to an end as Labour's faded. It had amassed a vast volume of information from the 41 research projects it had sponsored or assisted in one way or another. In the process it was able to provide the Government with invaluable information and thesis-mongers with untenanted fields of research. It even made 'race

relations' respectable in university departments. But because it was, like its parent body, prevented from expressing a political or corporate view, it had built up a net-work of 'family relations' who were deployed both in the ante-chambers of power and as close to grassroots as CARD could get. When they were not speaking privately to ministers, under-secretaries and civil servants, they were speaking to them through voluntary liaison committees, pressure groups, immigrant organisations, religious bodies — through NCCI/CRC, CARD, RRB, Society of Labour Lawyers, Equal Rights, Runnymede Trust, the Pakistan Welfare Association, the CIIR, the BCC, the Society of Friends. Although each member of the nuclear family had his own primordial loyalties, he was at one time or another, or sometimes at the same time, a member of other organisations. So that when, on occasion, it was necessary to get together an ad hoc body covering all shades of opinion — like Equal Rights for instance — a quick selection from the extended family was all that was required. 'The race professionals', in Heinemann's metaphor, 'do not necessarily devote full time to Race Relations, nor do they operate self-consciously in tandem. Through constant contact with one another they are able to know what others in the field are doing and complement rather than duplicate their efforts.' The coordination of these efforts was facilitated by the Survey's research activities, data bank and contacts (especially in the Press). The Survey in that sense was the cornerstone of the race industry and it was the relationships it had built up in the echelons of that industry that were to bring together the strange assortment of bedfellows on the Institute's Council in a concerted attempt to close down *Race Today* and sack the Director, Hugh Tinker.

* * *

'Impartiality' then, and academic but policy-orientated research, autonomy, but survival at all costs — these were some of the contradictions that demanded resolution. In

the 1969-72 war between the Council and the staff — fought on the battlefield of *Race Today* — the staff won, the Council lost and resigned.

* * *

But if the battle with the Council was over, the battle with the Director had begun. Tinker's *laissez-faire* liberalism had always been in contradiction to staff philosophy, which may be described as a sort of responsible radicalism: they sought the reforms that would radicalise the system, not consolidate it. At first, though, Tinker was a sort of non-antagonistic contradiction. Of course, there were members of staff whose loyalties were personal rather than political, and a few of them were loyal to Tinker. The battle over Jenkins had been fought on the issue of academic freedom though springing from the staff's disgust with the Institute's collusion with racist and imperialist policies. Tinker was sympathetic to the issue, but did not, could not — because of his own subliminal part in the ordinance of empire* — understand the motivation. Those members of staff who, like Tinker, were middle-class and white had at least been manual labourers in the field of race relations: they had touched white shit and seen that it was waste not because it was white but because it was the excrement of capital. Tinker had had no such experience. At best, he was an example of the classic liberal who vacillates between performance and principle....

The staff had given him the courage to stand up to the Council in the Jenkins' affair. He had wilted in the fight over *Race Today* but, himself threatened with dismissal, found common cause with the staff. Now that he was firmly in the seat of power — he was convinced that he had beaten the Council single-handed — he was turning into an antagonistic contradiction. He began to play the heavy, tough-minded *Direktor*.

* * *

*See interview in *Leicester Mercury*, 26 November 1969.

Almost the very first task of the new Council under the chairmanship of Rev. Wilfred Wood was to look for a location more relevant to the Institute's work and in keeping with the finances. The second was to seek alternative funds to set up a political wing which could, through *Race Today*, and other activities, articulate the voices of the black people. In March 1973 the Institute moved out of the Fortnum and Mason belt into the precincts of Pentonville. Towards Racial Justice was set up in the same month. From the very start it was clear that such a body was sorely needed and within six months it had established itself as a servicing station, at least, for black people on their way to liberation. This would hardly have been possible, however, if the 'palace revolution' in the Institute, more than all the manifestos and declarations of goodwill, had not earned it some sort of credibility in the eyes of black people. TRJ did not spring from the struggles of the people, but from a struggle that was no less valid: the struggle to free them for struggle — by removing from the face of power the veil that we, the compradors of capital, had helped to put there.

* * *

To understand the history of the Institute in terms of its times, it has been necessary to understand the motivation of the foundations and industries that funded it. Rockefeller, we have seen, had paid the Institute to tidy up 'the problems at the end of Empire' in the early fifties. Ford had first hired the Institute to prepare the site for the new American empire: the site engineers had to have previous experience — they had to be British. (Britain, besides, was a client of America). By the middle sixties the new empire had been sited; Ford had funded Guy Hunter's project on the 'transfer of institutions to developing countries'. Client states had been established all over the Third World and the relationship maintained through direct intervention or through the drug of aid and technology

fed intravenously through state capitalism. But to consolidate that relationship it was essential to return to an old tactic of colonialism: the 'education' of the elites of these countries. The President of Illinois University had once pointed out to Theodore Roosevelt that to make China a client state it did not require an army but a Chinese intellectual elite in tune with American aspirations and interests.

America and Ford had not forgotten that lesson. The vast sum of money that Ford gave the Institute to set up the International Race Study Programme in 1969 was not merely to have an intelligence of urban conflicts so as to prepare for urban guerilla warfare, but to move the Institute into a university at which, like the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, the comprador intellectual could be 'taught'. The tactic had become more urgent as neo-colonialism moved from aid techniques to finance capitalism — from sending experts to developing countries to creating native experts for development. As we enter an era where the natural resources of the Third World and not the occupation of the metropolitan power plants threaten to stop the wheels of western 'civilisation', the need to have expert and reliable agents in these countries becomes more pronounced. The defeat of IRSP and its resultant failure to attain university status has consequently turned Ford away from the Institute after a long and 'fruitful' relationship. Other foundations have taken note.

In Britain itself the obfuscation of class that 'race relations' and racism had produced are beginning to disperse — but owes little to the dogma of 'the white metropolitan left' which had held that 'race' was no more than an aspect of class and had accordingly tried to undermine the authority of black experience and the autonomy of black working-class struggle. It is the struggle against racism per se that has led to an understanding of 'race' (caste) as an incontrovertible factor in the struggle against capital — that at least has been the contribution of black people to the white working-class. If the State requires racism today, it is to return an unwanted pool of labour — unwanted because it hopes it is substitutable with southern European whites — to the 'reserves' it came from. A Repatriation Act is inevitable. And in the circumstances, research can no longer be entrusted to 'independent' bodies: the management of racism has to be direct — in the hands of the Home Office and the universities.

Such a reading of the objective situation demands a symbiotic relationship between the Institute and TRJ. If TRJ's concern is with the Third World in the metropolitan country, the Institute's concern must be with the metropolis in the Third World.



Trade Unionism v Revolution in South Africa

Ken Jordaan

A delegation from the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress visited South Africa from 6th to 20th October last year. The purpose of the visit was to inquire into the organisation of trades unions, particularly in relation to African workers.

The main recommendation of the TUC's subsequent report is that African workers should be organised into trades unions.

Ken Jordaan argues that the precondition for the establishment of such unions is the destruction of the revolutionary working-class strike movement that has emerged recently in South Africa.

In the parlance of the Johannesburg stock exchange, 'kaffirs' are 'lively' or 'quiet', a reference to mine shares. The phrase illuminates in a graphic manner the dependence of the South African economy on black labour: 5.8 million African workers, 732,000 Coloured (mixed) and 188,000 Indian. Over the last few years kaffirs have become livelier, but in ways which have deeply perturbed ruling class circles. We refer to the waves of strikes which have swept the country. In the first three months of 1973 alone there were 160 strikes involving 61,000 black workers. Then in September, the African workers at Western Deep Levels, one of the wealthiest gold mines in the world, struck work for higher pay. The police shot twenty-five miners, eleven fatally.

A spectre is haunting South Africa. It is the spectre of an African proletariat struggling valiantly to gain a foothold in the 'white' cities, to break their chains and establish themselves as a stable labour force with modern living standards. The fascist regime, for its part, has used the most repressive measures to stem this black tide. For it knows that a settled urban proletariat can bring down the economy and, with it, both apartheid and capitalism. A mood of rising expectations is gripping the black workers, especially those Africans who are more settled in the cities, have more skills and earn higher rates. This stratum comprehends the objective possibilities in a situation of rapid industrialisation, which is transforming its consciousness.

'Time is Running Out'

Against this backdrop a delegation of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) visited South Africa in October 1973 to investigate the organisation of trade unions, especially of African workers, 'and the part that they played or might play in the conduct of industrial relations generally, and in the determination of wages particularly'. The delegation met the leaders of white trades unions, spokesmen of industry, mining and commerce, the Prime Minister and Minister of Labour, and some representatives of emasculated African workers' unions. That they did not meet the leaders of the underground strike movement is hardly surprising. The ubiquitous secret police, for one, made this impossible. All the same, the TUC delegation was primarily concerned with the views of employers and privileged white trade unions whom it expects to initiate reforms in labour relations from above. The fear of revolutionary action from below is clearly expressed in the report the TUC delegation released on its return. The employers, it said, must be more realistic in treating with African trade unions, 'because time is running out'. Unless the industrialists respond positively to African grievances, 'the future for South Africa could be very bleak indeed'. The report gives continuing TUC support to the white trade union movement which has helped

to keep the black workers in chains and their wages at starvation levels. It expresses 'the need for all workers to unite' — black slaves with the white slave-drivers of the bosses and the fascist state.

To underline its commitment only to slight surface modifications in the *status quo*, the TUC delegation, at the end of its visit, promised the South African Government to do its best to quash a resolution passed by the International Labour Organisation last August, recommending the boycott of South African goods, ships and aircraft. Indeed, the TUC leaders envision South Africa as an imperialist base which could dominate with greater facility agrarian Africa to the north if certain changes were made in her labour relations. 'If non-white people are given free democratic rights in industry South Africa could become the workshop, the banker, the merchant and a principle influence for true civilisation and democracy in the whole of Africa', says the report.

Capital's Sergeant Majors

The TUC is a bureaucratic, reformist stratum comprising a labour aristocracy devoted to collaboration with capitalism. As the 'agents' of capitalism in the working class, the interests of capital and labour are, in their view, reconcilable, if not identical.¹ Witness the way in which the TUC comes to the rescue of capitalism in times of crises and sells out the interests of the militant British workers. Lenin aptly describes this trade union bureaucracy as 'the sergeant majors of capital in the ranks of the labour movement'.

In relation to the colonial world, the TUC, like the social democratic parties of the West, articulates a chauvinistic policy, firmly believing that the vested interests of Britain in South Africa must be protected and promoted since these have helped to build up British capitalism. Not surprisingly, therefore, the TUC seeks to defuse an explosive situation in South Africa and make it safer for British trade and investments. In 1969 Britain took 33.7 per cent, the lion's share of South Africa's exports, and in 1970 contributed 23.6 per cent to South Africa's imports.

South Africa is the focus of about half of all foreign investments in Africa. Britain's investments in that country comprised, in 1970, 58 per cent of the total foreign share.² The average rates of returns on British investments in South Africa ranged from 10 to 15 per cent annually for 1960-65, which were more favourable rates of return than those recorded by British direct investments in major recipient countries such as the US, Canada and Australia.³ Between 1965 and 1968 Britain earned more profits for her direct investments in South Africa than from any other overseas area. The TUC naturally fears the prospect of sweeping social changes in South Africa which would cut off such a vast

volume of profits. At the base of British profits in South Africa is the cheap black labour force employed at rock bottom wage rates. Hence the paternalism, chauvinism and extreme caution of the TUC in its approach to black workers' rights.

It is therefore not surprising that the TUC report maintains a deafening silence on the scandalously low wages British firms have traditionally paid South African black workers. It simply says: 'The delegation did not seek to enquire closely into current levels of payment in relation to the standard of living.' The TUC's plea that British firms should set an example by paying higher rates is a piece of hypocrisy because, as the *Guardian* and the British Parliamentary Select Committee have recently disclosed, they are among the chief culprits who pay starvation wages and strictly adhere to the minimum wage rates set by law, though nothing prevents them from paying more. At least one British paper commented that the TUC delegation let the British firms nicely off the hook by failing somehow to disclose the wage levels of the blacks in relation to those of the whites and to the soaring cost of living. On living standards, the TUC report is overlaid by a fog of ambiguity. At one point it writes of rising black living standards and welcomes the recent wage increases in mining and industry. Then it confesses that wage increases had been wiped out by inflation.

TUC's Past Record

In the past the TUC gave support to South African white trades unions with their policy of separate unions for Africans. The South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) included African members during the 1940s. Under Nationalist government pressure, however, it proposed in 1949 to set up under its control a Coordinating Council of African Trade Unions. In 1953 the TUC sent a delegation to South Africa and recommended that the Council should 'temporize upon such basic principles and agree to the membership being restricted to (white) registered unions', and 'organise African workers in parallel unions if they so wished'. Having recommended that 'in the greater interest and urgent necessity of unity', the white trade unions should apply apartheid, the TUC was instrumental in killing the SATLC in favour of a South African Trade Union Council (SATUC) which excluded Africans. This body was later reorganised as the Trade Union Congress of South Africa (TUCSA), which kept in close touch with the TUC and in 1965 organised a few African unions into the Federation of Free African Trade Unions (FOFATUSA) which affiliated to it. But in 1969, on the recommendation of its executive, TUCSA made Africans ineligible for membership.⁴ This racist body, the TUC believes, could improve the lot of the black workers and help to democratise the South African trade union movement.

The reforms advocated by the TUC delegation must accordingly be viewed against the background of their history of sponsoring and working in close cooperation with pro-apartheid and racist white trade unions. To call for full trade union rights, a living wage, the rate for the job, the repeal of discriminatory legislation against black workers; to propose adequate social insurance, universal free education, massive trade training opportunities — all these are empty gestures, coming as they do from a bureaucratic, chauvinistic body. In any case, the TUC is fully aware that the iron grip the fascist state and white unions exercise on black labour to ensure the volume of profits and entrench white privilege precludes their peaceful implementation. Probably the proposals are also designed to create the illusion in the black workers that their liberation depends far more, if not exclusively, on assistance from above and outside, than on their own organised strength.

Nor does one expect much to come from the TUC's proposal to mobilise international support for African trade unions

through a London based committee, which should raise about £100,000 to provide legal assistance and strike pay for black trade unionists who are the victims of police repression. The black workers want disinterested assistance from any quarter. It is clear that the TUC and similar trade union bodies will not lend support to a sustained underground struggle against apartheid and capitalism. For the whole tenor of the TUC report discloses a reliance on the privileged white unions and foreign firms to improve the lot of the black workers. What is more, it seeks to do so within the existing legal framework. The black workers certainly support the TUC recommendation that white workers should not emigrate to South Africa to take jobs blacks can do or be trained to do. But this recommendation should take the form of a resolution and be energetically propagated in all British trade unions to make it really effective. It is doubtful, though, whether the TUC would give such a lead in this matter. It has, after all, hardly lifted a finger to combat racism in British trade unions.

Superexploitation and the 'Economic Miracle'

Contrary to the TUC report, apartheid, that is to say the segregated supply of cheap, forced labour, does not inhibit the industrial development of South Africa. It has in fact been the condition for rapid industrialisation, especially for the boom of the 1960s, called 'the economic miracle'. The superexploitation of the blacks helped to finance the quickening tempo of economic expansion. Average black wages ranged from R400 to R692 a year from 1960 to 1970; those of the whites rose from R1,921 to R3,595.* Various surveys have fixed the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) for blacks at R876 per year, the barest survival level since it leaves out such essentials as medical and travelling expenses. To secure a subsistence wage, 50 per cent needs to be added to the PDL to raise it to the Minimum Effective Level.

The reasons for the growing gap between white and black wages are political or, more precisely, the tie up between capitalism and racism. Africans suffer from a double oppression: as unenfranchised workers from whom a surplus is extracted; and as blacks from whom an additional surplus is extracted by race laws:

(a) the pass laws under which the movements of Africans in and out of industrial centres are stringently regulated. An African worker must carry a pass (reference book) which determines his place of work and residence. Without it he can be 'endorsed out' — expelled to the Bantustans, the so-called

* One South African Rand = 69p.



African 'homelands' which are really reservoirs of cheap labour. It is therefore difficult for him to move from one job to try to get a better price for his labour power. In these circumstances trade union activity is hazardous. As soon as he is fired he must return to the Bantustans.

(b) the migrant labour system under which Africans contract for labour in the cities for a year at a time. As soon as their contract expires they have to return to the Bantustans and ask for a renewal. Migrants have to leave their families behind in the reserves while they serve their contracts. Such 'oscillating migration' serves economic and political objects:⁵ the wage rate of the migrant is assessed on the basis of his individual needs, not excluding those of his absent wife and children. Wage rates are therefore low, and profits for the employers high. The system keeps a check on the working class pretensions of the Africans. Separated from their wives and children and treated as temporary sojourners in the 'white' cities, from which they can be expelled for the slightest offence, they are of set purpose made to feel insecure and thus amenable to iron discipline.

(c) the system of labour bureaux in urban and rural areas and in the Bantustans now exercises a tighter grip on African workers. All work seekers have to register with these bureaux which canalise labour to the various sectors and individual employers on terms laid down in advance. In other words, market forces do not operate as a determinant of wage rates. Firms need not compete with one another for more or better labour by raising wage rates. Labour bureaux simply ensure them a regular supply of undifferentiated labour. Consequently, there is no stimulus for firms to train such labour which can be shunted to and fro at will. By 1970 some 3.5 million African workers were registered with these labour bureaux.

About half of the African labour force have acquired the status of 'permanent' urban dwellers. They meet the regulations which allow this status, having been born in the cities, or worked continuously there for one employer for ten years, or lived there lawfully for fifteen years. Under fascist rule, however, these 'rights' are theoretical, since individuals who give 'trouble' or are 'undesirable' can be removed by fiat. Thus this work force in the cities is described as 'temporarily permanent'.



Capital's Needs Strengthen Black Workers

These more settled workers have latterly been striking terror into the hearts of the rulers by their growing militancy. Having broken all ties with the Bantustans, acquired skills, raised their productivity to justify higher wages, they realise their importance to production. That many have their families with them is an important factor in their resolute struggle for a living wage. Capitalist development itself is assisting this class to acquire a greater permanence in the cities. With the rapid development of the manufacturing sector, mechanization and automation are obliterating the old distinction between skilled and unskilled work. They require more trained and educated workers who can no longer be drawn from the ranks of the small white population. After the strikes in the first three months of 1973, vocational and technical training was introduced for a limited number of Africans. To impart these skills mechanization needs a labour force that is stable. Moreover, to ensure their long term efficiency and growing productivity, such workers need to have their families with them. It appears that the government has furtively sanctioned this move. Thus, although it is the regime's avowed intention to turn all Africans into migrant workers, the inexorable laws of capitalist development are overruling, partially anyway, apartheid ideology. Still, capital intensive methods of production need a relatively small stable labour force and can dispense with the many more whom the government can remove to the Bantustans as migrant workers. It is from this stable labour force that we can expect the sharpening of the class struggle in the immediate future.⁷

The industrial colour bar is the fourth race measure which keeps black wage rates low. Under it, whites occupy all skilled jobs at high rates of pay, blacks the unskilled and many semi-skilled ones at low rates. Even though the distinction between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' is now becoming obsolete, the so-called floating colour bar contrives to preserve the big pay differentials. Under it the multinational corporations divide the more complex operations into simple operations which can be performed by semi-skilled labour. The whites take the best paid and easiest part at the usual high rate, leaving the others to be filled by black workers at the usual low rate. This is done without increasing the total wage bill of the firm.⁸ Moreover, slight wage increases are given to the blacks; for, given the low labour intensity of production, rises in wages have a negligible effect on profits, and in view of the oligopolistic character of the corporations, increased costs can always be passed on to the consumers who, in the case of the blacks, are powerless to protect or raise their real wages.

White Wages: Black Work

The 1.55 million white workers comprise a labour aristocracy *par excellence*. With their monopoly of the franchise they can pass laws in the parliamentary fowl-run to strengthen their trade unions and dictate conditions of service. With the intervention of the State, part of the surplus extracted from the blacks is appropriated to provide super wages for the whites and increase the rate of black exploitation. The high living standards of the whites rest on the superexploitation of the blacks. In mining, it has been computed, the surplus content of white wages increased from R338 in 1911 to R3,135 in 1972, while the rate of exploitation of the black miners increased from 181 per cent to 415 per cent over the same period. Much the same trend is discernible in manufacturing and construction where the surplus content of white wages rose from R387 in 1960 to R1,093 in 1969.⁹ The wage gap between white and African miners increased from 11.7 to 1 in 1911, to 17.6 to 1 in 1966, then reached 20.3 to 1 in 1971.

The average black miner received less in real terms in 1966 than in 1911.¹⁰ This, despite the fact that the productivity of the black miners increased more than that of the whites during this period. In agriculture, where the pass laws are used to pin down labour for long periods, the real wages of Africans are in some cases below the level of sixty years ago. The depressed wages in mining and agriculture derive from the bias of the State, 'a vast engine of labour', for channelling more African labour to these two sectors. Less labour is directed to manufacturing which pays Africans better rates. Consequently the gap between white and black wages in this sector is smaller. It increased from 5.2 to 1, to 5.8 to 1 between 1965 and 1970; and in construction from 5.4 to 1, to 6.5 to 1 over the same period. In mining, moreover, the white workers can veto the training of African labour for more skilled jobs; secondly, their powerful trade unions can strike to retain the huge pay differential. Thus, if the wages of the black miners are increased slightly, the white miners will demand even higher pay increases without promising increased productivity.

Most of the white wage earners are not productive workers who produce surplus value (commodities). In 1970, for instance, over 700,000 of the 1.27 million white wage earners were employed in the tertiary sector, comprising the civil service, banks, commerce, finance, professions, the wholesale and retail trades. They cannot be included among productive workers because many of them belong to the sphere of circulation, while the others do not produce surplus value but merely help to realise or increase it. What is more, the whites use the industrial colour bar to monopolise certain skills, the scarcity value of which they exploit to keep their wage rates high. Many, again, are merely overseers of black workers whom they slave-drive to ensure super wages for the whites.¹¹

There are about 5 million unemployed Africans. This vast number derives partly from the industrial colour bar which reserves many skilled and semi-skilled jobs for whites and partly from the various Land Acts which limit the use of the land by Africans to 13 per cent of the country – to the Bantustans, which are overcrowded and suffer from soil erosion and infertility. The upshot is that a class of peasants could not emerge, which was precisely the purpose of the land measures. Unable to eke out any significant livelihood from the land, the Africans, stripped of all means of subsistence, are wholly dependent on selling their labour power outside the Bantustans. The State adroitly manipulates the reserve army of labour to undercut the wage rates of the employed Africans in the cities and prevent them from becoming an organised labour force with powers to bargain for higher wages. It is significant, though, that during the strikes of last year the State did not expel the strikers to the reserves and use the unemployed to till their jobs. The strikers had acquired over a long period certain basic skills which made them irreplaceable. This is a major development in the workers' struggle.

Black Labour: A Buyer's Market

African trade unions cannot be registered in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act, which does not recognise African workers as 'employees'. Consequently, Africans cannot negotiate with the government or employers for wage claims. Above all, strikes by Africans are a criminal offence. Although in theory unregistered African trade unions may exist, under fascist rule they are not allowed union facilities by the employers, while the State has in practice smashed them by gaoling or deporting their leaders. As a result Africans have to sell their labour power on terms dictated by the State and employers. The whites, by contrast, dispose of theirs in a seller's market.¹²

Minimum wage rates are set by industrial councils in industries where there are registered (white) trade unions; by



government Wage Boards where there are none. Industrial Councils consist of representatives of the employers, white employees and the government who jointly regulate wage rates for white workers and the black workers in the whole industry. Predictably, these bodies, in which the blacks have no voice, set the minima for blacks as low as possible so as to secure higher wage rates for the whites. Moreover, no minima are set for blacks in agriculture, mining and domestic work, which together employ more than half the African labour force and where, consequently, wage rates have remained at rock bottom levels for long periods.

To determine the minima for Africans in industry and the tertiary sector, a white government official, called the Bantu Labour Officer, sits on the industrial council. His job is to prevent the minima for Africans being set so low that recurrent labour disturbances might result. This is the measure of the helplessness of the black labour movement to guard and promote its living standards through official channels. Where there are no white trade unions, the government uses Wage Boards to fix minimum rates. Such rates also guide the minima laid down in industrial council agreements for Africans.

Under the Apprenticeship Act, blacks generally, and Africans more particularly, are debarred from acquiring training as apprentices for skilled jobs. Only registered trade union members may practise skilled trades, and because African trade unions cannot be registered, this provision excludes Africans from being employed in jobs requiring an apprenticeship. Coloured and Indians may be apprenticed if they pass certain high school requirements. Then they must find a white craftsman to train them and be accepted by the white Apprenticeship Committee. The result is that in 1960, of the 25,000 fitters and turners, there were only 200 Coloured and 62 Indians. Naturally hardly any Africans could qualify.

In skilled jobs, the whites with their powerful trade unions are protected by the rate for the job (equal pay for equal work) to prevent undercutting by cheaper black labour. Since whites are generally more skilled and productive, this principle, endorsed by the TUC, operates as an effective colour bar in the higher skills. In the semi-skilled trades, where the white trade unions are not so strong, the government intervenes on their behalf by preserving a certain ratio of semi-skilled jobs

for whites whose bargaining power is weaker at this level and who cannot insist on the same high rate of pay. Because of the acute shortage of white labour, however, exemptions are granted under this system of job reservation to allow blacks to fill temporarily such semi-skilled jobs reserved for whites.

The Politics of Apartheid

Conclusions of far reaching political importance may now be drawn. In the first place, the wages of the blacks cannot be raised to a meaningful subsistence level while the super wages of the whites are left intact. For this would make capitalist production unworkable as one for accumulation and profit. Least of all can black wage rates be brought to the level of the whites within the assumptions of the existing order. In the second place, any substantial increases for the blacks can be effected only at the expense of the surplus wages of the whites. For black superexploitation provides surplus value and the surplus content of white wages. Even under a so-called free capitalist democracy in South Africa the wages of the whites would be whittled down. The white labour aristocracy, however, realises this danger, and that is why it must keep exclusive political control, with the immigrant bourgeoisie, of the State apparatus. For these two classes depend for their economic and social prosperity on the monopoly of political power, exercised on a racist principle. The demand, therefore, by various black middle-class programmes that this State should open its doors to admit the blacks to universal suffrage is an unrealistic one. For it is in fact asking the whites to preside over the abolition of their economic and social privileges and commit *hara-kiri*. For one thing, the introduction of the franchise for the black majority would lead to the abolition of the industrial colour bar and hence throw open to them those jobs which the whites have monopolised to secure their high wage rates. For another, the infiltration of blacks into all levels of employment, as they acquire skills, would bring crashing down the high pay structure of the whites, who then face the prospect of replacement by a cheaper black labour force. Finally, those social privileges of the whites, like preferential education, subsidised housing, pension schemes, etc., would all go by the board.

Racism enters as an indispensable element into capitalist exploitation. The State used racism to help create classes, now sponsoring the growth of some — the labour aristocracy, the immigrant bourgeoisie, a black proletariat; now inhibiting the growth of others — a black middle class, an indigenous peasantry. The superexploitation and political tutelage of the blacks, based on race, helped to promote capitalist development. Racism, in brief, not only permeates the social fabric; it is deeply rooted in the minds of the white population.



Black Middle Class: A Non-starter

That is one reason why purely nationalist programmes, demanding non-racial democracy within the capitalist framework, cannot succeed. There is another: the South African State was so constructed as to preclude the emergence of a black middle class strong enough to play a leading role. Cause and effect interact: exclusive white political power causes the weakness of the black middle class; its weakness in turn prevents the development of a nationalist movement for a neo-colonial solution. Unable to push its own demands for political and legal equality, the black middle class and aspirant middle class, is a non-starter in the South African revolution. Accordingly, the struggle for the abolition of the colour bar and for democracy can be waged only by the black workers. Yet the proletariat has more fundamental tasks to accomplish than the question of the vote and legal equality, which can in no way solve their major economic problems. Having abolished the colour bar, the black workers, guided by a leadership schooled in scientific socialism, will proceed to conquer the commanding heights of the economy and place the means of production under public ownership. The revolution can succeed only as a socialist revolution.¹³

So great is the fear of the black workers in ruling class circles that some new 'Christian radicals' in South Africa recently advanced the following proposition: if change must come with violence, let it be confined to the framework of capitalism; to ensure this, so they argue, the government-sponsored Bantustan Chiefs should take the initiative. It is difficult to see how a tribal bureaucracy can meet the demands of the working class and at the same time help to make a middle-class revolution.

Slowly capitalism itself is helping to consolidate a growing number of black workers in the cities. Here they are gathering strength and growing to maturity. Having become a class for itself, they can proceed to speak in the name of all oppressed toilers. When they do stand up, they will shake South Africa and the world.

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- 10 F. Wilson, *Labour in the South African Gold Mines, 1911-1969*, Cambridge University Press, 1972, p. 46; Hepple, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-1.
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- 12 A well researched account of the labour and trade union laws is given by A. Guelke and W. Siebert, 'The Control of Wages in South Africa', unpublished paper, London School of Economics, 1973. A summary, under the title, 'South Africa's Starving Work Force', appeared in the *New Statesman*, 23 March 1973.
- 13 On the tie up between capitalism and racism and the socialist character of the South African revolution, see G. Arrighi and J. Saul, 'Nationalism and Revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa', in *The Socialist Register*, 1969, Merlin Press, London, pp. 154-5. See also R. Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7, who draws similar conclusions.

BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to last month's article on 'The Black Explosion in Schools' and January's 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power'.

Education?

Sir,

Farrukh Dhondy's article, 'The Black Explosion in Schools', in last month's *Race Today* is, in my opinion, the most important document to be written which deals with the relationship between Black children and the educational system in Britain, since Bernard Coard's book, *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal*. It is the first time that this burning issue has been subjected to that kind of political analysis which does not deal with Black children and British schools in isolation, but sees it as an important area of Black/working class struggle. Dhondy's thesis is that the situation of Black children in the schools represents an important level of fight against 'the functions of schooling', the intentions of the State, and ultimately, capital. Having been through secondary comprehensive schooling, it was with critical awareness that I read Dhondy's article, but found very little to quarrel with. I would like to make a number of points, however.

Firstly, it is important to understand the attitudes of Black parents to education, the value they place on it, and the expectations they have of their children. There must be very few Jamaicans who are not familiar with the rhyme: 'Labour for learning before you grow old, for learning is better than silver and gold. Silver and gold will vanish away, but a good education will never decay.' This sums up the attitude of most West Indian parents to education. But more important, they see education in Britain as a way out of the factories for their children. So the Black child is sent to school to be educated, to learn, only to find that he is being moulded and processed as well as being subjected to the racial prejudices of white teachers and pupils alike. It is here that the battle begins, a battle which is all the more difficult for the Black child to fight because of his parents' expectations of him.

Secondly, while the function of schooling in the case of 'the white working class kids' is that of processing labour for capital's needs, in the case of Black children, it is both labour processing and forced acculturation. The latter is in essence a process of systematic cultural depersonalisation. It is this that Black children react against initially and which later develops into a resistance against the general functions of schooling. For those Black children who came to Britain

at the primary school age or those born in Britain (in a sub-cultural environment), acculturation has been set in motion at an early age and is continued during the secondary schooling. It is my experience that it was the Black children who joined the educational system during the secondary school phase who presented the greatest problems for the smooth working of the system because they had not been subjected to the primary school phase of acculturation. The Black child being 'forced to fight' here produces a situation of paradox: the needs of capital institute a process whereby this very need is being denied.

This leads to my third point: the use of educationally subnormal schools as a short-cut method of meeting capital's needs, where labour processing is not the goal but acculturation, since this level of 'education' can only result in unskilled labour. It is for this reason that Bernard Coard's book was of such great importance. It pointed to the mechanisms by which the victims were selected and also pointed to the attack on their being during 'schooling', Farrukh Dhondy lightly scolds Coard for his conclusions about 'culture bias' and 'middle-class' testing. This is unfair, since Coard had only intended to deal with a particular area of the educational system. He did not set out to 'explain the situation as it is in secondary modern schools and in the comprehensives'. Tulse Hill school operates ESN streams. When I was at school, over 90 per cent of the Black pupils were concentrated into the three lowest classes in each year, and there were 'special classes' for 'special cases'. Bernard Coard's book does, in my opinion, point to an explanation of this situation.

My fourth point concerns 'The Power of Language'. Dhondy writes: 'The language of schools is an oppressive instrument. It does for the Black what it has done for the working class white, only more so. It is used as a basis for separating the various levels of skilled and unskilled workers that school produces.' This is quite true. However, I think that Dhondy misses the point. The language of schools is the major instrument of cultural depersonalisation. Speaking of the struggle of Asian workers against British capital, Dhondy writes: 'Their own language created an awareness in negotiations, but it gave them a lens to their political identity, magnifying the necessity to stick together.' The same applies to Black children in British schools. Their language becomes a weapon in the

fight for not only their mind but also their being.

Finally, 'The Refusal to Work: A Culture of Resistance'. Dhondy states that: 'This particular brand of class defiance' amongst the youths in the Black community 'spreads to the schools'. But it has been my experience that the refusal to work begins in school and is carried on into the Black community. My contemporaries and I spent the greater part of our school life playing cards, dominoes, dice, listening to rock steady and reggae, and generally skanking. So while the elders are struggling in the factories, and the youths on the streets, Black children are struggling in the schools. Farrukh Dhondy has shown that these struggles are not isolated but form the totality of the Black/working class struggle in Britain.

Linton Kwesi Johnson

Wages for schoolwork

Sir,

Farrukh Dhondy's article is a useful contribution to the politics being developed impressively in *Race Today* just now. What he has to say about the resistance of black teenagers and children in schools complements Darcus Howe's 'Fighting Back' (*Race Today*, December 1973) in a way that helps to expose the inadequacy of conventional exhortations 'to struggle for full employment', such as Vishnu Sharma's in the January 'Backlash', with his meaningless reference to 'the right to join a militant, organised, working class' (my italics). Dhondy's article, in effect, too expands an important moment in Selma James' article in the January issue where she writes that 'for labour power to be reproduced in the form of children, these children must be coerced into accepting discipline and especially the discipline of working, of being exploited in order to be able to eat'; and it gives extra meaning to her later words about the strategy wherein 'the lines between revolutionary Black and the revolutionary feminist movements begin to blur': '... we pose the question in a way which assumes that the unemployed have not to go to work in order to subvert capitalist society.' As Dhondy suggests in his last paragraph (albeit in a compressed and abstract way), there is a clear connection to be made between the resistance of many black school leavers to shit work, which has — to use his

earlier words — 'turned the sale of their labour into a sellers' market' and the way in which the resistance of black teenagers and children *within* school can only have the effect of strengthening the fundamentally important demand for wages for schoolwork.

So it's unfortunate that, at a key moment, Dhondy should write: 'While the white child asks, "Will this help me in my job?" or "Will it get me more wages when I leave school?"', the black teenager takes the query to its conclusion by knowing that it won't do either.' The first part of this statement is just not true: there certainly *are* white working class teenagers who get beyond a mere inconclusive scepticism. Secondly, and more importantly, Dhondy's simple antithesis tends to obscure the fact that black teenagers are performing a vanguard function for the *whole* working class. As Selma James' January article helps to clarify, this depends neither on an objective working unity between black and white teenagers, nor even on a sense of common cause in either.

Dhondy raises a number of other, very difficult matters, of which I'll mention just three. They are related to each other, and I think he deals unsatisfactorily — because too hurriedly — with all of them. They are the issues of 'intelligence' (there can be much more to Counter-Intelligence than Bernard Coard offers); of what Dhondy calls the 'black elite', their vulnerability to co-option and their relationship to what he calls 'the base of the class pyramid'; and finally, of teachers who don't want to 'assimilate' the 'black explosion' — who, rather, identify politically with it but at the same time have the job of being a schoolteacher everyday and, what is more, want to teach. I hope Farrukh Dhondy will be able to return to these matters before too long.

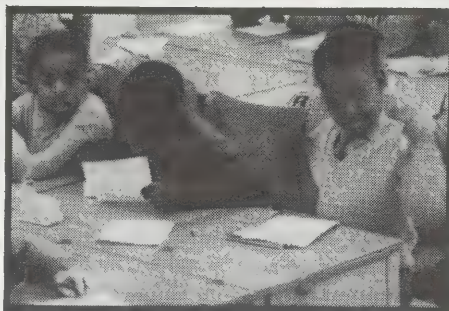
Jeremy Mulford

Black organisations

Sir,

As a young West Indian worker I have found Farrukh Dhondy's article in *Race Today* thoroughly interesting and thought-provoking.

What is clear from Farrukh's article is that Black youths' rejection of society manifests itself in two forms. Firstly, in the school institution and secondly in the refusal to work. The rebelliousness of Black youth is great and continually growing. What Farrukh did not deal with is the relationship between this rebellious section of Black youth to the first generation of West Indian youth who passed through the British school system. I feel that this first generation of Black youth had a rebellious feeling towards the school system, but it took a 'moderate' form. This first generation largely chose to take part in the 'productive partnership', and



by doing so has developed different social values. Those of us who have entered the 'productive partnership' are not poles apart from those who have refused to work. We live in the same community, listen to the same records, we dress in the same styles. The refusers of work and the young workers are not exclusive categories, for those of us who are wage-bound continually carry on a struggle against our employer, e.g., taking an hour off here, a day there. I see this as a basis for potential unity.

I feel that there are two other points that I would like to comment on: Farrukh's final point is that 'the apprentices to the refusal to work demonstrate their demand for a wage for their enforced apprenticeship'. I can only see this demand taking away the revolutionary potential that this section of the Black working class has. The end product of that demand is that the youth will still be part of the capitalist 'productive partnership'. I see this as a deepening of their revolutionary content. The question is, can the situation develop where Black youth are part of an organised fighting force? This remains to be seen. But I feel it will come about only by the influence of a Black working-class organisation. Black organisations (whose mainstay has been young black workers who chose 'the productive partnership') at this stage in time must redefine their position with relation to the continual increasing rebelliousness of Black youth and the different forms it takes. It is the Black organisation that can bring about the unity of the Black working class and give direction to the black youth. C.H.

Refusal to work

Sir,

Farrukh Dhondy's article 'Black Explosion in the Schools' has cleared away a lot of debris which stifled a serious view of the educational system as it affects black children in British schools. His article serves to destroy (as much as any single article can) the theory that the attitudes and actions of black children in schools are somehow to be construed as behavioural problems which are to be put right by a combination of psychologists and black teachers. Dhondy sees it as it is — an important element in the total struggle being waged by the black working class in Britain. Of the greatest impor-

tance is the way the article illustrates how the rebellion of the unemployed in the community who refuse to do the shit jobs, informs the rebellion in schools.

Sylvanus and Suzanne in the fourth year, for instance, assume as their models of behaviour Charlie and Donna, who've left school after skulking around the sixth form for two or three years and have had very little employment since, if any at all. They are the breed most dangerous to capital as they refuse to enter



the productive partnership under the terms that this society lays down.

I found support for Dhondy's view in the strangest of places. Huey Newton, in his recently published *Revolutionary Suicide*, traces his experiences in American society as follows:

In our community some people achieved a special kind of status. They drove big cars, wore beautiful clothes and owned many of the most desirable things life has to offer. Almost without trying they seemed to have gotten the things for which the rest of the people were working so hard . . . *They were not forced to compromise by imitating white boys and going on in school [my italics]* . . . This was the world of Walter Jr., my second eldest brother, who was always called 'Sonny Man' in our family . . . Sonny Man was a hustler . . . To be a hustler means to be a survivor. The brothers on the block respected him and called him a hipster, even in those days, *when people ask me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I said I wanted to be like him [my italics]*. To me Sonny Man was much freer than the rest of us. Compared with my father's struggle, the way Sonny Man lived offered much to my hungry eyes.

There are many amongst us claiming to be revolutionary socialists who at once view this way of life as dishonest and corrupt, suggesting all kinds of moral reasons why it is counter-revolutionary. They are better off in the ranks of Billy Graham and other Christian missionaries. For let us make it clear that in writing off that section of the international black working class, they write off the sources that produced Malcolm X, the majority membership of the Black Panther Party, and the prison movement, who between them launched the most powerful revolutionary assault on the American State in modern times. That is the evidence before us (what that section of the class can do) — true or false?

Huey Newton was organising in the black community while Jonathan Jackson was at school. Jonathan Jackson had a new model — not Sonny Man — but Huey Newton. This is a social phenomenon (the refusal of work and the rebelliousness in

schools), not confined to Brixton, but expressing itself internationally, whether the young are refusing jobs in Oakland, California, or refusing to cut cane in the Caribbean or to plant tea in Ceylon. Within the international reserve army of labour there is an overwhelming tendency to refuse being a reserve army of labour to be called on by capital at will. Increasing numbers are refusing to answer that call.

Linda Christmas, writing in the *Guardian* (23 January 1974) on the sugar question in Jamaica, says:

There is 25% unemployment in Jamaica, but even so the sugar industry is short of labour. Who wants to work on the land in a country where most people work on the land? Who wants to work on a plantation with all its connotations of slavery? The young (they say) would rather hang around Kingston and mug the odd American tourist or paint 'Yankee go home' on a wall or sell a little Ganga. Anything but work in sugar.

We must add that those who do work on



the sugar plantation are able to wage a concerted struggle against Tate & Lyle because they face no competition on the labour market from the 25% unemployed. Is that counter-revolutionary? Let the so-called revolutionary socialists speak.

The only quarrel that I have with Farrukh is his failure to indicate the international dimension of the movement he so precisely identifies. To move out of Brixton into the wider world is to see greater possibilities for that movement then simply wages for their enforced apprenticeship.

Michael Froix

Black studies

Sir,

At least one Comprehensive School has ordered extra copies of *Race Today* so that Heads of Departments can study and discuss Farrukh Dhondy's 'The Black Explosion in Schools'. I hope many other schools are doing likewise.

Secondary Modern students never got the credit they deserved for making their schools such hot potatoes that education authorities hastily dropped them in favour of at least the notions of 'going comprehensive'. Thanks to Farrukh, black students are getting the credit they deserve for forcing our establishment to think very hard about the restructuring of our whole school system — a restructuring

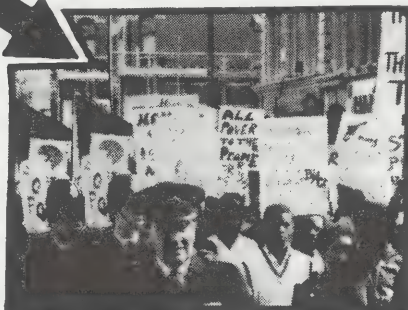
which is urgently needed in the interests of the great majority of *all* students, black and white, female and male.

The crucial point is indeed whether this restructuring in general, and Sixth Form Black Studies as the very thin end of this wedge, are to be aimed merely at winning a few more recruits — black and white — for the rat-race, or if it is to have a truly liberating influence on all students.

Two and a half years of working with Sixth Form Comprehensive Black Studies groups has convinced me of the need for and potential usefulness of some such work — teaching and discussing Afro-Anglo-Caribbean history on the lines laid down by Malcolm X in 'Teaching Afro-American History'.

Students who completed a course of this kind in 1971-3 found that they read more, studied more, were more active in community affairs, and felt better for finding out something of what their peoples had achieved and how they had struggled. But they insisted that what they were doing was not enough. Black Studies, they said, should begin in the First Year, compulsory both for black and white (because if white people knew how black people had suffered in history they could judge them justly and correct the wrong ideas they'd grown up with) and should be an examination option in the upper school.

Moreover, Black Studies were needed more by teachers and parents than by



students. A West Indian girl on a holiday course told us she'd told her parents she was going on a History course, because 'Black Studies' would never have been allowed.

Now with the 1973-4 group the steam has gone out of the course. While I must blame myself to a serious extent, I do hear of similar experiences in New York schools, in Tulse Hill, and now in Farrukh's article. Our students are saying: 'This is not interesting to us now. Perhaps if it had been an exam option in Forms IV & V we'd have liked it.' Some react against the very name: 'It makes you think of Black Power, and those people want you to hate all whites' — Farrukh's students 'earmarked for second-class elitism'? What the system is doing to some students today?

While it is clear that the main struggle for change goes on outside the schools, we inside do not have to wait for the revolution to press for the complete abo-

lition of streaming in all its forms, for the training of more black teachers, for promotion of black teachers where promotion is due, for the adequate representation of black communities in P.T.A.'s, on governing bodies, and in education administration, and for Black Literature sections in school libraries. In all the progressive parties we can press for what John Williamson of the *Morning Star* has called 'bolder promotion to leadership of non-white comrades'.

Ken Forge

Black professionals

Sir,

Your January editorial quite vividly & remorselessly reflects the changing social reality of life in this country, not only in relation to black workers and/or unemployed, but in relation to *all* workers and *all* unemployed. That editorial, coupled with the February editorial and the article by Farrukh Dhondy on 'The Black Explosion in Schools', indicates nothing less than the de facto piecemeal dissolution of bourgeois socio-economic relationships, on the one hand, while on the other hand, it indicates the piecemeal emergence and ascendance of proletarian political-economic power.

It was with this political understanding in mind, that I read the article by Farrukh Dhondy (particularly the sections entitled 'Black Studies: A Battle for Minds' and 'Refusal to Work: A Culture of Resistance'). By actually being inside the educational apparatus, Farrukh Dhondy has provided us with an analytical examination of the British School System. Moreover, he has shown us the general tendency (or, the general direction) of education in the immediate future, i.e., the planned bourgeoisification of some of the brighter or 'cleverer' black students. I really shouldn't say 'planned' as if it were some sort of clandestine operation. It is, of course, planned or calculated (that is, the creation of a black 'elite'), however, it is also the natural order of things in a bourgeois society, inasmuch as it is the workings of a society which accepts the fact that it has a festering problem, and intends to deal with that problem (not solve or resolve it, but 'deal' with it by 'conjuring up' a whole class, regardless of size, of black professionals who have 'made it'). It is in this context that 'the refusal to work' takes on dynamic proportions. And, it is here that I criticize Farrukh Dhondy, not the analysis, but the fact that there was not more of it! I understand the space limitations involved — that sort of dilemma is insuperable. However, it is the refusal to work on the part of West Indian youths (and, in so many words, the refusal and rejection of an alien culture, viz., English), which carries tangible revolutionary implications. If any theme, or leitmotif, was to be developed, this was the one. J.I. Adkins Jr.

Selma James replies: Which side are you on?

My response to some of last month's Backlash is made easier by my sisters in the Power of Women Collective, who have already covered important ground.

Angela Weir doesn't agree with my 'seductive' analysis. As she presents it, neither do I. 'The working class' is *not* a 'false category'! It is made up of a hierarchy of castes from white skilled men to Black unwaged and unskilled schoolgirls. The caste of women produces the commodity labour power in the home; the home is a point of commodity production.

Women are involved in refusing 'our' work. This work reproduces adults and children in the form of commodities to be chewed up by capital and *in the process* reproduces the ideology of female inferiority — sexism. *Being forced to do* 'women's work' convinces all of us that 'women's work' is our natural bent and nothing else is. *Capitalist commodity production is simultaneously capitalist ideology production.*

Angela proposes instead of the fight to refuse work, a fight against the ideology of sexism.

Politics, however, is about power. Revolutionary politics is about working class power. Marxism (in this case Marxist feminism) aims to destroy capitalist power to force us to work making commodities (in home and factory) and being commodities (sex objects and factory hands; marriage market and labour market), and thinking of ourselves and each other as commodities (sexism, racism, etc.). Idealism (in this case male leftism) sets out to destroy ideas — ideology. But as long as we don't destroy the *work* of producing commodities and ideology, we destroy neither the commodities nor the ideology. Angela is close to Teri Turner who proposes 'self-actualising, pro-human values'. Good religion. Disastrous politics.

Hermione Harris can say 'Women can, and do, withdraw their domestic and sexual services from their men' (i.e. refuse 'women's work') and in the very next sentence deny it: 'But the point is that the majority of women *don't* [my emphasis] express "the day-to-day rebellion in the home" . . .'. It seems the white male left of both sexes loses its cool when housewives are posed as a revolutionary force.

As a result, the points the article made were not dealt with.

1. The Black movement is a working class movement. Is it or isn't it?

2. Ditto the feminist movement. Is it or isn't it?

3. Ditto the rebellion of children against schools and the family. Is it or isn't it? (We recommend Farroukh Dhondy's article in last month's *Race Today*. Would you tell Black children (or for that matter white ones) breaking up the school system that they shouldn't, because workers once fought for education? Perhaps you'd like to warn their parents, but know in advance that would be scabbing.

4. Like schools, the organisations which the working class, internationally and of both sexes, made a revolutionary struggle to form are now the class enemy. Len Murray of the TUC and his merry men are frequent visitors to Downing Street. If things get even tougher for British capital they might move in. The *Morning Star* accuses Heath of being unpatriotic and says he could have avoided his crisis if he'd taken their advice. Neither could do a better job for the CIA if they were on its payroll. Why is it so difficult for Angela to distinguish between miners and Tolpuddle Martyrs on the one side and these excrescences on the other?

5. Among the lower levels of the hierarchy of labour powers, comprised internationally mainly of Third World peoples and white women, is to be found capital's industrial reserve army. We are making a struggle for money, free goods and services — *wages* — to be able to resist entry into the factory. Is that revolutionary or isn't it? Is that anti-imperialist or isn't it? Between demanding jobs and demanding wages is a class line, that is, a race line and sex line, that is, a line between a pink rag and a red flag.

6. Male chauvinism and racism are not moral infirmities but an expression of class divisions and therefore class weakness. When we have the power internationally to 'change the wage differentials' then the weakest of us will have gained the power to forge unity on our terms and, though Angela doubts it, that unity and that power are the basic elements of a revolution. Either class power and unity make the revolution or 'The Party' does. Choose.

7. Wages for housework is at least as political as wages for mining or transport or any other forced labour. Last month's editorial in *Race Today* quotes the *Financial Times* about the miners: 'The objective fact is that in the process of getting their money they cannot avoid damaging the economy, frustrating a central policy of the Government and seriously undermining, if not actually destroying its

ability to govern. They are therefore engaged in political action whether they like it or not.' Why are wages political for miners and economic for miner's wives or daughters or mothers or sisters? Do they or don't they all work for the same boss?

Finally to the woman who identified herself 'as a sociologist . . . and as the author of a book on the housewife to be published in 1974', and then goes on to say 'Housewife is a label society puts on us. We must shake it off, by refusing to identify with the housewife role', I can only add the following. If housewives were getting as much an hour as sociologists, she would not have such a crisis of identity. Housewives are a crucial section of the working class and therefore crucial to the revolution. Sociologists are a crucial section of the State and therefore crucial to the counter-revolution. We identify ourselves as revolutionary slaves, not as counter-revolutionary masters.

Selma James
Power of Women Collective and International Feminist Collective

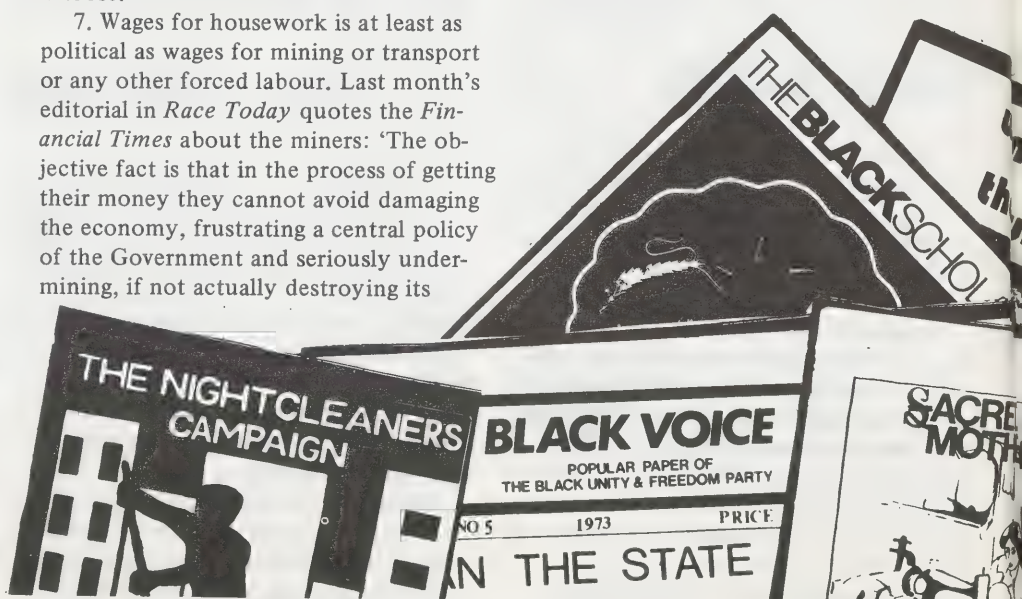
Black women

Sir,

Selma James' paper in the January, 1974 issue is welcome.

A most important part of her paper is that which deals with the relationship between the different layers of the exploited class, i.e. the relationship between 'the more powerful and the less powerful' in our class.

The last 25 years in Britain have produced a history of one area of this relationship — Black workers and their communities having to extend the definition of politics, of socialism, of revolution, and maintain autonomous but fraternal organs of struggle because the existent left and metropolitan workers' movements denied the Black experience.



Within the Black movement, Black males deny the Black females' experience, in fact any females' experience. Definitive documents coming out of the Black movement in Britain either don't mention the experience of Black women, or are Black males' attempts to define and control the experience of 'our women'. There are exceptions. These are a very small minority.

The response of parts of the Black movement is roughly as follows: first, that to expose the experience of Black women is distracting and creates disunity when we need Black unity; second, that the liberation of women is a foreign white middle-class concept that subverts the unity of Black struggle.

Black women are oppressed and exploited, and have been, whether or not a White women's liberation movement exists. Generations of wasted, sacrificed, bottled-up, as well as rebellious female lives in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean lie behind the experience of today's Black female immigrants.

This is the submerged and largely voiceless stratum in the Black movement. It is not that Black women do not rebel; it is not that they do not say loud and clear and repeatedly what their experience is. They do every day in all sorts of ways. It is that their statements, their actions, their definitions, their perspectives and resistance are all drowned in the overwhelming tide of the Movement's exclusive concern to highlight the relationship of the Black male working class to capital and the relationship of the Black and White male working class. Very, very rarely is our major weakness as a class examined and exposed, i.e. the colonial relationship between men and women in the Black movement and in the Black communities.

I do not write on behalf of women. I write as a man criticising our practice in the Black movement. Nor do I ask for males to suddenly start writing about women. I'm simply emphasising the fact that there is an experience in the Black

working population which is usually unrepresented in its formal political stances.

What, for the Black female immigrant worker, are the most persisting experiences historically? What experience and tradition of struggle and resistance did she develop in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean? How does this experience flow into her total experience as worker, mother, wife and sexual object in Britain? Where the hell is her voice and the volume of her experience in *Race Today*?

Every time a Black woman of any age refuses to conform to the existing pattern of private and public relationships... this is a political act. Sometimes, like when she sticks a knife into her master, this is big news, at least locally: Can *Race Today* begin to report all these actions as political news of struggle within the Black working population, since all news of political struggle by the oppressed helps to strengthen the movement?

The unity of the class, the unity of the Black working class, cannot be achieved so long as the different layers within it continue to oppress each other. There is only the prospect of a necessary and difficult struggle by Black men; this is to continue ridding themselves privately and publicly of all the vestiges of capitalist culture (and this includes the way we perceive women, the way our most intimate identities depend on their various submissions, their public and private subordination). What the women, White and Black, do in the meantime, and how they do it, is for them to decide. But their struggles inevitably involve a new and more profound definition of struggle, of politics, of class and of revolution.

That definition does not cancel the existing definition that this is a racist and capitalist society. The struggle against racism and capitalism must intensify through greater mobilisation, but we mobilise for more profound visions than those held by white-supremacist, sexist Marxists of the existing Left. We mobilise for a socialism that will be neither sexist nor racist.

Gary Burton

I'm surprised to have someone attacking an article like Selma James' 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power' on a personal basis, accusing Selma of 'railing', and in her opening paragraphs completely distorting most of what the article had to say.

In her three main points:

1. She says that Selma rails against the white trade union movement. Does Miss Weir really think that the trade union movement is a Sacramental Movement that should not be attacked? Black people have had to struggle on many fronts, against discrimination in work and out of work, by unions and bosses alike, and now against the new beast in our midst, the Race Relations Industry. I think for a woman the position is similar in many respects, and for a Black woman in this society it is even more overbearing. To go on to say that she knows comparatively little about the Black Movement is very insulting. The mere fact that Black people in this country and many other parts of the world are challenging and breaking down institutions shows there is no excuse for ignorance. The burning down of ghettos was not a directive from the Communist Party, and one does not have to wait for anything to understand the wage differentials between the Third World and Western Capitalism to know about this society, to understand it in its most oppressive form. These wage differentials are imperialism in action. And this is what Selma's article is about.

2. Now Miss Weir, are you really serious about your second point? Even the capitalist understands that in order 'to ensure its hegemony' children must be brainwashed from an early age. Thus the school system. The demands of the white working class weren't for the education system we know today. By saying that, you are misconstruing everything they have fought for. If to say, as Selma does, 'schools are institutions organised by capital to achieve its purposes through and against the child' is a one-dimensional analysis, as you call it, then please tell me what other analysis you can give.

3. By the nature of its organisation trade unions cannot exist without capitalism, and capitalism without trade unions, whether that capitalism is state capitalism or any other type. It is simple as that, and it is being made clearer every day. The Tolpuddle Martyrs weren't and the miners aren't agents of the CIA. To even conceive of such a thing shows how little you understand about the role of the official trade unions. Thus, I strongly recommend you re-read 'Women, the Unions and Work'.

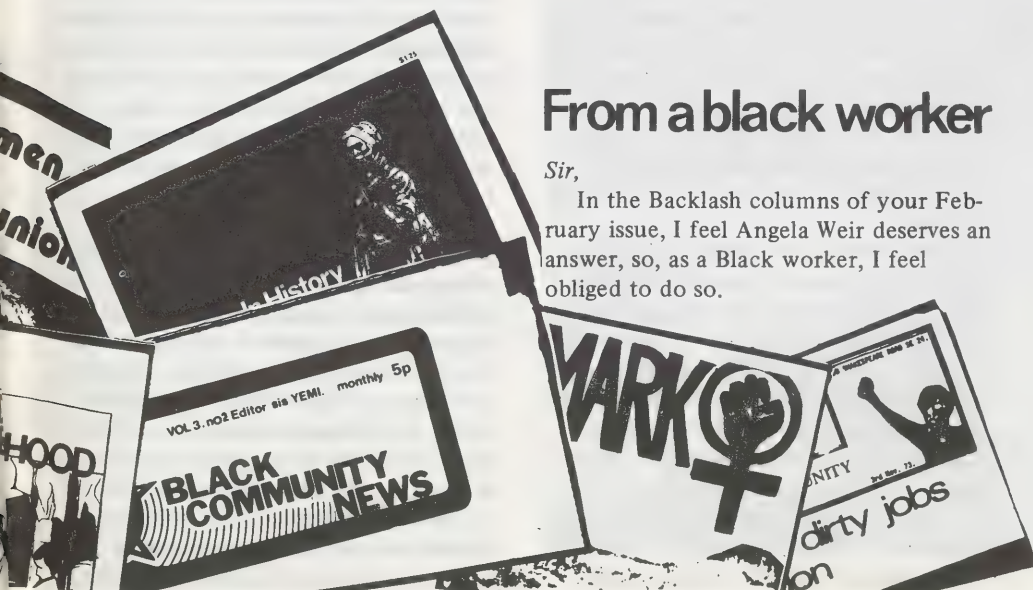
Finally, Mr. Editor, I must say how pleased I was to see an article such as 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power' appearing in your magazine and sincerely hope you keep up the good work.

Theophilus Phillip

From a black worker

Sir,

In the Backlash columns of your February issue, I feel Angela Weir deserves an answer, so, as a Black worker, I feel obliged to do so.



Burnhamism and Jaganism: The Politics of the Old Order

Eusi Kwayana

In 1953 the People's Progressive Party, with Jagan and Burnham as leader and chairman, respectively, issued its election manifesto which stated, among other things, that: 'We who live in the West Indies and British Guiana must consider ourselves one unit in the international colonial liberation movement; we must fight for independence; striking blow after blow at the imperialist stronghold, weakening it and finally breaking loose from its shackles.' Twenty years later, after both Jagan and Burnham have had a crack at the Prime Ministership, Eusi Kwayana shows that Guyana is still under the stranglehold of imperialism.

The political establishment in Guyana is dominated, in British and North American terms, by the government and the 'alternative government' (the opposition); that is, by the People's National Congress (government) and the People's Progressive Party (opposition). Dr. Cheddi Jagan carries the official title of Leader of the Opposition and receives a special salary, about twice that of backbench members of Parliament. The office work of Leader of the Opposition is financed by the government at G\$25,000 a year. Jagan's brother is the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. In addition to this, parliamentarians, under a Burnham law, qualify for pensions under certain conditions.

In private life, Jagan controls the Guyana Import-Export Agency (GIMPEX) which is a big capitalist firm whose capital structure is known only to the PNC and the government, but is a closed book to the PPP membership and the general public. One defecting Indian PPP member — Akbar Alli — who launched a campaign against GIMPEX as a 'family' company, did not recover from the bullet which hit him as he sat in his car one evening in the village of Triumph on the East Coast of Demerara. His killer has not been traced, nor the motive discovered. No other campaign for the exposure of GIMPEX affairs has been heard of.

Jagan's Revisionism

Cheddi Jagan has not called his ideology 'Jaganism'. It is officially described as Marxism-Leninism. Those of us who are acquainted with the theoretical basis and the revolutionary method of Marxism-Leninism, not modern revisionism, know that 'Marxism-Leninism' is a mere ornament with which Jaganism fascinates world opinion. The motivating force of the PPP is the drive of the East Indian people for pre-eminence in the society and in the government. In the same way, but in retaliation, the Africans saw the PNC as their instrument for pre-eminence in the society and government.

Both leaders, after the split, first Jagan, and afterwards Burnham, consolidated racial bases in the form of political parties and began to conduct the inter-racial rivalry from these bases. Burnham

was heavily assisted by ASCRIA (African Society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa), since Africans at first had no perceptible race consciousness after centuries of conditioning with Euro-Christianity through white missionary activity.

Although both leaders, from these bases, have proposed 'integration' of all the races in the country and probably desire as much integration as possible, they approach it in different ways. Their approaches are perhaps the main political contradiction in the society, a contradiction which exploded in racial violence in the sixties, but which is not resolved and is now gaining potency at a new level. In these interracial confrontations, it is now clear, outside forces did their full share of meddling.

It was in order to forestall these explosions that in 1961 I, while General Secretary of the People's National Congress, and H.H. Nicholson, a multi-disciplined scientist, Africanist and Marxist thinker, issued 'The Villager' calling for a rational solution to the racial aspects of the Independence problem, demanding a joint premiership of Jagan and Burnham, or else partition of the country into an African Zone, an Indian Zone and a Free Zone in which anyone could live. We made it clear that this was a plan for independence, that each nation would be free to exercise its rights of self-determination and that unless there could be an open patriotic pact between the two major groups, or separation, the country would be open to neocolonialist pressures. The leaders promptly accused us of Apartheid and we explained that Apartheid was racial separation under a 'master race', while we had proposed independence with separation, with no race dominating another.

PPP integrationists subtly follow the line that Africans who accept Marxism-Leninism, as represented by Jagan, are good Africans. The others can be treated callously under the label of reactionaries. Good Africans are acceptable in the PPP Indian stronghold. Whoever disagrees with the Secretary-General and Leader, Jagan, however, on matters of principle, is no longer a good comrade and becomes a traitor.

In practice, the PPP's development

programmes were weighted heavily in favour of Indian interests. It created, with British support, the most massive agricultural settlement ever created in the Caribbean outside of a sugar plantation, namely Black Bush Empolder. This has turned out to be a formidable base of East Indian agriculture . . .

And what is PNC integration like? Since East Indians remember with nostalgia the many benefits in agriculture, commerce and education they enjoyed in the seven years of Jagan's rule, the PNC is trying to outdo Jagan in regard to Indian progress in order to win East Indian political support. This has brought about much dismay among Africans who see themselves as taking second place to whoever is in power. Interracial rivalry is therefore not at an end. Many East Indians seem to realize that expressions of support for the ruler will bring benefits and they have joined the PNC in significant numbers. The Indian bourgeoisie is making big financial contributions to the PNC's budget. But the Africans of Guyana are expected to be satisfied because they have a black Prime Minister and a black elite in power and are expected to watch with satisfaction and empty-handed as the Leaders use national resources to win nominal support from the PPP.

ASCRIA's Campaign

ASCRIA's approach to the racial question differs sharply from these approaches, but ASCRIA is not a political party and is not a candidate for political office. The organization works for the liberation of black people everywhere in the world and in fact spearheaded present-day African liberation consciousness in Guyana, and to some extent in parts of the Caribbean . . .

In January, 1973, ASCRIA, after protesting deals for sales of land by sugar companies, called upon African and East Indian workers and peasants to rebel against feudal-capitalism, the system by which foreign sugar companies, notably Bookers, control the best lands of the coast, 200,000 acres, almost exactly as they did during African slavery and Indian indenture. ASCRIA pointed out that racial competition between Africans and Indians was the deliberate design of the sugar plantations and demanded that to

begin solving this contradiction the African and Indian workers and farmers must make a joint assault on imperialist property, beginning with unused sugar lands. The campaign aimed at using the historical dialectic to achieve two things: a destruction of feudal capitalism and an honorable basis for unity among the exploited masses. The response to the campaign was very positive. What shocked the ruling classes was that landless people of both the African and Indian races responded to the campaign and accepted to the letter the 'guidelines' put out by the organization.

Most political organizations, except the government and its party, saw the revolutionary significance of the campaign. The Working People's Vanguard Party gave positive and sincere support to the people, whereas the PPP, with a view to elections in 1973, came out in favour of the campaign. Although the PPP's support was opportunistic in many ways, it made a patriotic contribution when it offered the Prime Minister its 23 votes in the National Assembly so that the government could obtain a two-thirds majority to amend the constitution and take over the sugar lands without compensation to the Sugar Barons. The Prime Minister ignored this offer and the PPP never pressed it or made it the subject of a campaign.

The PNC has said that the campaign was unnecessary and 'designed to start racial violence' and was 'a plot of the PPP and ASCRIA to overthrow the government'. The PNC maintained its hostility to the campaign although ASCRIA insisted that it was a campaign against feudal capitalism and not against the government as such.

Burnham's PNC also tried to claim that it had intended to take over the sugar lands and was having orderly discussions with the sugar companies. What it had been doing was buying out portions of unused sugar lands with precious funds and in secret deals with the sugar companies. The PNC officials had come down heavily in favor of compensating the sugar companies for 'God's earth' while continuing to flaunt the banner of revolution.

.... The people's direct action forced the government to make certain limited changes in feudal capitalism so as to give feudal capitalism an acceptable image and justify Bookers' claim to being a good 'corporate' citizen. However, feudal capitalism is far from dead, or even wounded. A concession to the revolutionary principle that sugar lands are the people's property, to be transferred without money and without price has been cancelled out by deliberate counter-concessions to feudal capitalism

The foreign bourgeoisie who operate in Guyana are happy, in some cases enthusiastic, over Mr. Burnham's 'socialism'. This is because the Cooperative Republic, an idea born with ASCRIA,

has been coopted and sabotaged by the PNC. Thus, a financial exploiter, Jessel, head of Sandbach Parker, declared in 1970: 'The Cooperative Republic is a stroke of genius.'

Early in February, 1973, on the occasion of the opening of Skeldon Airport, a joint effort of the government and Bookers, Chairman Ellis of Bookers boasted: 'We have no problems with the Guyana Government. This is much unlike the case in other Third World countries.' The Prime Minister, when he took the rostrum on the same occasion, said: 'The cooperation from Bookers is heartening.'

The ties between the Guyana government and the feudal capitalists run deep. That is why the government did not seize the chance of amending the Guyana constitution with the aid of the Opposition to repeal the provision that 'compensation must be prompt and adequate', and so seize all the sugar lands.

The question now arises: What precisely is Burnhamism? We are justified in using the term since the Party has a Forbes Burnham Ideological Institute and one of the earliest lectures given there was by the Minister of Public Affairs, Mr. Hamilton Greene, General Secretary of the Party, on 'The Foundations of Burnhamism'.

US AID Exposes Burnhamism

In theory, Burnhamism is cooperative socialism and non-alignment. In practice, Burnhamism is the bridge between imperialism and the people's mass movements. It is the role of Burnhamism to infiltrate Black Power, African Liberation Movements, Socialist Movements, Worker's Organizations, the non-aligned movement and to impress them with the need for pragmatism and collaboration with imperialism, the need for 'fair play' for the imperialists and the tactic of uniting with the strong enemy against the weak one, but in such a way as to

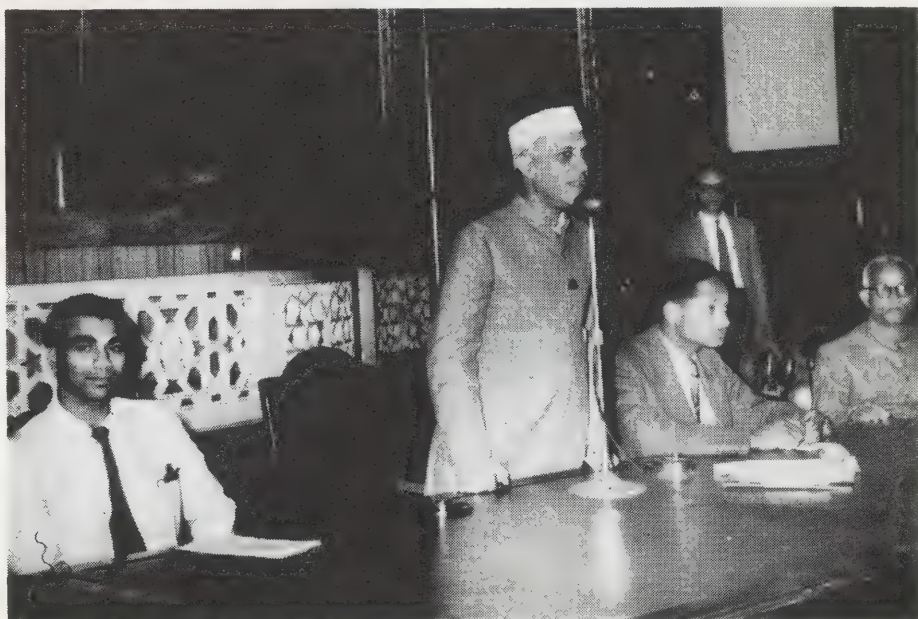
win favors from both. Other countries in the non-aligned movement are also direct agents of U.S. imperialism. The foreign diplomats in Guyana understand quite well what makes Burnhamism tick.

Mr. Robert Hamer, U.S.A.I.D. Chief in Guyana, said publicly that Guyana was a model country. For this reason, he has successfully recommended U.S. specialists to hold a seminar on agricultural development in Guyana rather than elsewhere. He often hosts parties at which government ministers are present. He and the U.S. Ambassador, Spencer King, were honored guests when the PNC held a thanksgiving on the occasion of Mr. Burnham's 50th birthday and were photographed at the tomb of the Prime Minister's parents. The danger is that the relationship between the U.S. officials and the PNC hierarchy are not merely diplomatic, but social and personal. Ministers were present at Robert Hamer's special Christmas Party in 1972 which was held late owing to former President Johnson's death. At the very time when the Christmas atrocities against Hanoi were in full swing, Sir Shridat Ramphal, Guyana's shamefaced Knight and Foreign Minister, entertained, among others, Mr. Spencer King at home. This was one of the few occasions — the bombing of Hanoi at Christmas — when Mr. Burnham dared to 'attack' the USA. A statement from the Prime Minister's office said that the P.M. was 'disappointed' at the bombing, 'coming as it did during a season of goodwill'.

Why 'disappointed'?

The Nixon election victory had brought scarcely disguised expressions of delight from the political establishment in Guyana. The government-owned *Daily Chronicle* wrote in an editorial under the caption, 'Nixon Again':

For Third World countries striving for peaceful progress, this development meant that they could breathe easier since peaceful



Jaganism and Burnhamism

progress, difficult in any circumstances, is well-nigh impossible in a world rent by tensions and suspicions and the lingering fear that some nervous hand might 'press the button' at any time.

Nixon deserves his victory. While he strikes a curiously ambivalent posture on race problems at home, in the last year he has shown remarkable statesmanship on world issues. And he is on the verge of ending the protracted embarrassing war in Viet Nam . . . (*Daily Chronicle*, 9 November 1972.)

So 'ambivalence' at home can be excused by a theatrical foreign policy and by playing well to the front of the stage in international affairs.

The other occasion on which the Guyana P. M. 'attacked' his chief aid donor was on African Solidarity Day, 1972 when he said: 'So we must not bother with Britain and the U.S.A. when they talk to us about objectivity' and objected to the U.S.A.'s breach of the U.N. sanctions against Rhodesia. But we go on to accept U.S. aid for 'pragmatic' reasons.

'We Nationalised Demba, hosted the non-aligned conference and hosted Carifesta . . . We are the only Cooperative Republic in the world.' With these magic charms, the PNC leadership hopes to lull the people of Guyana into a deep sleep, so that the political elite can go on with the job of constituting itself a bourgeoisie of a special type, using public resources as its means of production.

Co-opted Co-operative Republic

The nationalisation of Demba, hailed at the time by us as a progressive move, and so it is at the merely *national* level has not altered the capitalist type relations between the workers and the enterprise. We have always been prepared to mobilise the people in support of the Government in case of international pressures following nationalisation. We did so at the time of nationalisation and at the time of pre-nationalisation workers' strike. However, there have been no sig-

nificant pressures. Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank came to the rescue of the Government soon after nationalisation, by lending Guyana Bauxite Company (Guybau) \$9 million to see it through a difficult period. What then is the economic role of Burnhamism in this period? The role of Burnhamism is to make sure by control of the Government and by manipulation of the mass movement that when nationalisation comes, the international bourgeoisie are over compensated. This happened in the case of Alcan's Demba. For that reason, the Government of Canada is still one of Guyana's keenest friends. Canadian aid personnel (CIDA) are here at the moment and will be here for some months to look into Guyana's needs, while the donations of U.S.A.I.D. have been very frequent and widespread. Our rice expansion programme, our pure water development, the bulk of our infrastructure (roads), Guybau's purchases of new machinery and equipment, all of these are financed by the Government of the U.S.A. or on its guarantee. Even the Guyana Police force is officially on the U.S.A.I.D. aid programme for Latin America.

It is not surprising therefore that those organisations and individuals which consistently explain to the people the racist-imperialist nature of the USA Government and ruling class are harrassed by the Guyana Government. In this context must be seen the deportation of Shango Umoja and Mamadou Lumumba from Guyana. They were here as teachers in Government schools and as officials of the Pan African Secretariat. Their public utterances have always exposed the oppression of the black people and the Indians of North America. Their deportation came soon after they had written in the *Sunday Graphic* a lengthy assault on the USA. They were also close to ASCRIA and its radical lower class

membership rather than close to the new elite with its empty social existence. The claim of Guyana's Government that these men broke the conditions of their stay was never stated in Guyana because of evident falsity.

PPP and PNC are Establishment

The break between ASCRIA and the PNC was precipitated because ASCRIA, after private complaints to Mr. Burnham, felt compelled in the interest of the people to accuse 'people in high places including ministers of the Government' of corruption and of playing games with the idea of the cooperative revolution. That it was left to this organisation first of all to demand a political position against the cancer of corruption and then to accuse formally two ministers before the Ombudsman, shows the attitude of the PPP as a member of the establishment. . . .

On 16 September, 1971, on the programme *Nightride* on Guyana Broadcasting Services, Mr. Burnham in reply to a question promised [a] code of conduct [for Ministers and PNC Parliamentarians to deal with corruption] by 'year end'. The country after two full years has heard nothing more about it.

Two points need to be mentioned in regard to Guyana's role on foreign affairs. The PNC's role was and is to keep the African Liberation struggle to which the country through the P.M. subscribes G\$50,000 a year, separated from other liberation struggles. At Lusaka, he spoke up very directly for Africa Liberation but when he came to Vietnam demanded 'the withdrawal of all foreign troops from South East Asia'. In declaring the non-aligned conference in Georgetown open and giving the key-note address, Mr. Burnham did not condemn U.S. colonialism in the Western Hemisphere in which Guyana finds itself, or condemn it at all. At the recent meeting of the Security Council in Panama, when Latin American nations challenged the U.S.A.'s continued sovereignty of the Canal Zone, the Foreign Minister of Guyana cleverly diverted the attack by raising the question of Belize (British Honduras) and pointing out the readiness of the U.K. to give independence to the territory but for the Guatemala claims. This was certainly a relevant issue, but the report of Mr. Ramphal's speech in the Government media did not include any comment on the Canal Zone issue. It was important for Guyana to raise the Belize question, but not correct for us to relieve the USA on the Canal Zone issue.

The people of Guyana who stand for a profound social revolution are attached to neither the leadership of the PNC nor that of the PPP but recognise these parties as instruments of the Old Politics.

NB: Abstracted from an article in *Black Scholar* (Vol. 4, No. 8-9, May-June 1973) by Eusi Kwayani, Secretary-General of ASCRIA.



Neither Jaganism nor Burnhamism - but revolution

Grenada: 'A Fight to the End'

The Violent Passing of the Colonial Order

Two societies violently confront each other in the small Caribbean island of Grenada. On the one hand are the representatives of the old colonial order, personified in Premier Eric Gairy and his small band of hirelings. On the other is the new society battling to emerge from the stranglehold of the old — the mass of agricultural labourers, the unemployed, young and old, the small urban working class led by dock workers, the professionals, civil servants, teachers, small businessmen — those who have stormed onto the Caribbean political stage with a general strike which began on 1 January.

Their demand — Gairy must go and a new social order be established. Freedom Now.

The British response has been to send out frigates to the Caribbean. This is the fifth occasion in the last five years that foreign troops have intervened into the politics of the Caribbean peoples (1968 - Anguilla - British troops; 1969 - Surinam - Dutch troops; 1973 - Bermuda - British troops; and 1974 Grenada - British troops.) In Grenada's case, the British Government is not concerned with supporting Gairy in particular. His corruption and Papa Doc-style of repression is an embarrassment to them and other reactionary governments in the Caribbean. They, too, will be happy to see the back of Gairy. What they are concerned with is who and what takes Gairy's place. The intervention of British troops is to ensure

that the New Jewel Movement, which has massive support of the population, is kept out of power.

In the last year, NJM has made a crucial intervention into the politics of Grenada. They mobilised the population around a programme for fundamental change. They have proposed, with overwhelming support from the masses, the destruction of the colonial state and its replacement by 'Government by Assembly of the People at their place of work and in the local communities'. They have also proposed the nationalisation of banks. In short, they propose the establishment of the second revolutionary state in the Caribbean (Cuba being the first).

Attempts have been made to assassinate three of the leading members of NJM — Maurice Bishop, Selwyn Strachan and Unison Whiteman. On 18 November, they were lured into an alleyway and badly beaten up by Gairy's Secret Police.

The Committee of Twenty-two, consisting of trades union leaders, shopkeepers, businessmen, professional bodies and churchmen, was formed. They demanded the following:

1. To disband the Secret Police.
2. That a Commission of Enquiry into the beating of the NJM members be set up.
3. The head of the Special Police, Belmar, should be suspended.

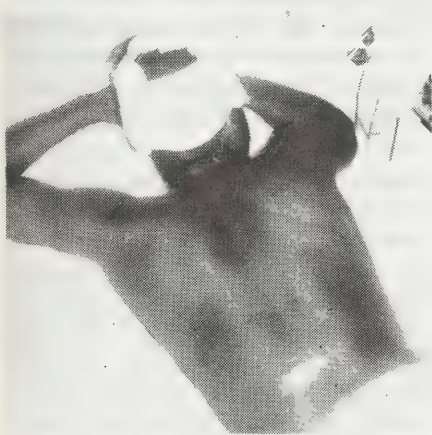
The Committee said these should be met by 27 December, otherwise they

would call a general strike. Gairy said he would carry out the demands.

He set up a Commission of Enquiry. On 12 January it suspended its sitting until after Independence (7 February). Gairy announced that he would disband the Secret Police — some of them were taken into the regular police force. The mass of the population took to the streets in some twelve demonstrations which began with the general strike on 1 January. (Venezuela and Trinidad oil workers have refused to send supplies of fuel in solidarity with the general strike. Barbadian and Trinidadian dock workers have also refused to load ships bound for Grenada.) The Special Police has been reconstituted and used to launch a series of murderous attacks on the demonstrators and their property.

Official independence is scheduled for 7 February. But the actions of the masses indicate that they are asserting their independence on the streets of Grenada now. The NJM, in its Manifesto, sums up the hopes and aspirations of the masses of Grenadians as follows:

'To create the new life for the new man in the society, it is necessary that we reject the present economic and political system which we live under. More than this, we need to construct an entirely new system of values where the lust for money, power and individual selfish gain are no longer the motivating factors. The creation of this new man demands the transformation of the minds and hearts of each and everyone of us.'



Three members of the New Jewel Movement who were beaten up by Gairy's Secret Police, Selwyn Strachan, Maurice Bishop and Unison Whiteman (l. to r.)

The Battle of St. George's

Alister Hughes

On Monday 21 January 1974, a gang of some 500 Secret Police aided by the Royal Grenada Police Force broke up an anti-government demonstration in St. George's, capital of Grenada — called to demand the resignation of Premier Gairy and his government.

The demonstration, over 10,000 strong, was the twelfth protest march since the general strike began on 1 January. At the end of the procession through the city the crowd assembled on the Carenage to listen to addresses.

On the Sunday prior to the demon-

stration, announcements on the government-controlled Radio Grenada requested that all disbanded Police Aids report to Mount Royal at 10 am on Monday and they were each to bring along three interested persons.

As the demonstrators listened to speeches, a gang of Secret Police came trotting, some ten abreast, down Tyrell Street, chanting: 'Clear the way,



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The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and the role of the accounting department in ensuring the integrity of the financial statements. It also highlights the need for regular audits and the importance of transparency in financial reporting.

The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups. It also discusses the challenges of data collection and the importance of ensuring the reliability and validity of the data.

The third part of the document provides a detailed analysis of the results of the study, including the findings of the surveys, interviews, and focus groups. It also discusses the implications of the findings for the organization and the need for further research.

The fourth part of the document concludes the study and provides a summary of the key findings. It also discusses the limitations of the study and the need for further research.

clear the way Jewel (New Jewel Movement), they go try we for murder.' Women and children panicked and fled into nearby buildings. The rest of the demonstrators stood their ground and booed the Secret Police who regrouped some 200 yards away. Suddenly there was the sound of a gun shot. Where it came from is impossible to tell. The Secret Police began bombarding Otway House (the Trades Union Headquarters) with bottles and stones. Most of the demonstrators retreated speedily, but between 50 and 60 men retaliated with stones and bottles, which they got from inside Otway House, and any objects they could lay their hands on.

For sometime as the battle raged there was a marked absence of uniformed police. Eventually, a land rover of armed uniformed police arrived from the direction of the Telephone Exchange, which is at the back of the area where most of the demonstrators had retreated to for safety. The demonstrators surrounded the land rover and begged the police to take action against the Secret Police before the situation deteriorated. Eventually, the land rover moved towards the area occupied by the Secret Police.

Then began a series of events I would have found impossible to believe had I not been an eyewitness to them. The uniformed men of the Grenada Royal

Police joined forces with the Secret Police and began to advance on the anti-government demonstrators who were still standing outside Otway House. Both forces smashed the windows of business places and attacked the demonstrators. Some demonstrators jumped into the sea as they were being stoned by Secret Police. Other policemen fired their rifles into the buildings in which demonstrators had hidden.

From a vantage point in Otway House I watched as the mob, led by armed uniformed police, drew nearer to Otway House. I watched as the police shot at the buildings and as bottles and stones rained against the walls and through windows. Then it was no longer safe to look out. The door of Otway House was closed and bolted. Benches and chairs were piled behind it. Women and children were herded into the back rooms. The rifle fire came closer and everyone was told to get as close to the floor as possible. I was in a room which measured some 10 feet square into which over 30 people were huddled. There was not enough floor space for everybody and some were literally lying on top of others. They were mainly young people — schoolgirls, dressed in their school uniforms, teenagers, clerks, a few dock workers and one old woman. One girl was crying softly. Then as we heard the door of the building being broken

down, somebody started to recite the Lord's Prayer. Everyone joined in. I felt a sense of calm settle on the mass of frightened humanity huddled in that cramped room.

Blinded by teargas, stumbling over obstacles and struggling to get to the front door of Otway House, I was conscious of a man lying at the head of the stairway. I recognised him as Rupert Bishop. He looked dead. I have since learned that he was killed by a bullet.

As I stumbled out of Otway House that afternoon I was confronted by a group of Secret Police men: one had two bottles under his left arm and another bottle was in his upraised right hand ready for the throwing — another man brandished a cutlass menacingly. Other policemen carried sticks and they were all advancing towards me. I could only hope that it would be clean and quick. I owe my life to Deputy Commissioner Adonis Francis who had been out of sight on my left. He grabbed me by the arm and began leading me away. He had difficulty keeping the Secret Police off me and I was lucky to receive no more than the stinging blow with the flat of a cutlass across my back. Francis led me three or four hundred yards away from the scene where a man assisted me away to find asylum in a house.

A recording of Alister Hughes' report of the demonstration was broadcast on a phone-in programme on Trinidad radio. Below are some of the responses:

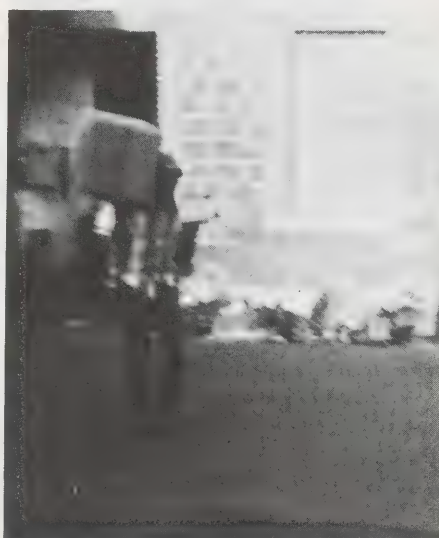
A man: It's a pity that Mr. Alister Hughes' (reporter) comments cannot be publicised . . . to generate some sort of sympathy for the people in Grenada, because, when things happen in Uganda and places like that, West Indian Governments are fast to respond and to pass their comments, and want to know what is happening and why. It is funny that Grenada is right there, and a couple of years ago we were thinking about uniting with Grenada, and sort of taking Grenada under our wing, and all of a sudden this has been going on and we have not heard one single word from the Government, and nobody seems to know what is happening really.

Broadcaster: You mean the Trinidad Government?

The man: Not only the Trinidadian but all West Indian governments - nobody has mentioned one single word for or against, nobody . . . Is Mr. Hughes' report accurate or is it not? If it was not for Mr. Hughes, we here in Trinidad would not have known anything was going on in Grenada. Because you get such scant reports in papers . . . I find it unreason-

able and unfair. Local people in Trinidad today do not realise how serious this thing in Grenada is. And last night on your programme you had a Mr. Fox giving his comments and making statements like there were no policemen there on the scene, which contradicts what Mr. Hughes is saying. Now if there were no policemen on the scene how can four policemen end up in hospital?

A man: All I want to say is the chap who just spoke I think was talking a lot of nonsense because asking the Governments of the other Caribbean Islands to come in, that is what I think is nonsense; we



Secret Policeman looting.

have our own troubles here in Trinidad.

A man: I heard from Grenada that two youngsters, a girl from St. Josephs' Convent and a boy from the Grenada Boys' Secondary School have died as a result of the incidents on Monday afternoon at the Carenage. The boy was shot in the face and the girl died as a result of the lacerations she received from bottles and stones. Now, at present, there is supposed to be a demonstration in Grenada today, but the result of that has not come to knowledge as yet.

Broadcaster: Give me an idea of how you know about this, where did you get the information?

The man: I got it from Grenada, from somebody who came up — came from Grenada on the plane today. This information has come in from the towns. What we can gather so far is that in the country districts there hasn't been any sort of riots or violence so far, but most of the shooting is taking place in St. George's throughout last night there were sporadic bursts of gunfire.

A man: This [Grenada] is the only country in the Western world where we have Ton Ton Macoutes, like we hear about so much these days in Haiti. It is most unfortunate, very regrettable, that this thing has to be tolerated in this democracy with the advent of independence just a mere few days away. One

wonders why it is that the British Government has not taken its rightful place in coming to the rescue of these poor Grenadians.

Broadcaster: Someone else said that the Caribbean Governments should not get involved because we have problems of our own.

The man: Well, even if we have problems of our own, we're not going to stand by and see these people assaulted and beaten and kicked and jailed and murdered and things like this.

Broadcaster: What would you recommend?

The man: What I could recommend is that the British Government brings pressure to bear on the Gairy Government and get it into line. You would have noticed that the Governor has gone out of Grenada. She's very silent, she's refusing to comment but from her attitude you would realise that she is in sympathy with the people.

A woman: I'm calling from St. Vincent,

I'm a Grenadian in St. Vincent and I'd like to substantiate the same things that last man has said. I can get no news except what I hear and we are exceedingly worried about our families and everybody there. Personally I would like to make an appeal to every Grenadian to assist in any way possible Because the situation is exceedingly bad at present. We are living in fear Mr. Gairy has not said anything and this has made the situation a hundred times worse . . . and he is going to victimise us — so this is a fight to the end and we want every support possible. We can't get independence under these circumstances.

A man: I came from Grenada last Friday, and I'd just like to let the people over here know the true situation like what it is over there. Well, Gairy is actually covering up the true situation because most of the people are against him. They're not for him as he said in the papers, and there is an element of fear in the people over there. Everybody just

For further details of the struggle in Grenada and solidarity activities in this country contact: F. Augustine, Grenada Cause for Concern, 142 Highbury Hill, London N.5. Phone 01-226 6700.

say they fear the Secret Police and everybody is talking about Gairy. And they say he should have left a long time and they have rumoured that he even rigged the ballot boxes.

I saw a few policemen running around over there. As soon as people saw these policemen with guns they became very quiet, you know, and the people are saying that Gairy wants to get independence so he can get a name for himself. He's not really interested in the will of the people.

A man: I'm from Grenada and the situation is much worse than even that tape can portray . . . but I can say this for sure, most Grenadians are living in terror, and no one knows who will be safe and who will be dead, that's all.

A 46-year-old motor mechanic, who has lived in Britain for 20 years, went home recently to Grenada to organise his family's permanent return. He returned after only three weeks and gave *Race Today* the following report:

I went home to Grenada, originally for three months. I bought some land and intended to build a house and set up a small business. I could only manage a three-week stay. If there is any word worse than bad, then that is Grenada. It is the worst experience I have had in my life. I would prefer to rot here then go back with Gairy in charge. Every man is on his own.

I attended a few of the demonstrations and this is what it is like. On Saturday, 19 January, there was one of 14,000 or 15,000 people, young and old. There were old people aged about 75 walking with sticks. The demonstration was moving along Granby Street. The policemen blocked the way and said that the people could not go through. They barred the road and motioned the people through the tunnel. The demonstrators refused to go through the tunnel for fear of being teargassed. The schoolgirls from the convent sat down in the street and refused to budge. The boys from the Grenada Boys' Secondary School pushed their way through the police cordon and the demonstrators followed.

The demonstrators were demanding the resignation of Gairy and to have a new government before independence.

Gairy went on the air and threatened to fire all civil servants, nurses and teachers, and threatened that school leavers who participated in the demonstration would never get jobs.

On the following Monday Eric Pierre, President of the Seamen & Waterfront



Mr. Eric Pierre, President of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Union being cheered by the large crowd on the Carenage outside the Union's headquarters. Three days later, 21 January, when Pierre was addressing demonstrators, the Secret Police attacked them.

Workers, was addressing another demonstration when the Secret Police attacked. They were carrying guns. I have not seen it in this country. At night time you could hear a lot of gun fire. Some of the uniformed police are against what is going on, but cannot really do much. The Secret Police also loot the shops. At 2.30 one night in St. George's I saw three carloads of Secret Police shoot down a shop door and take goods.

If the demonstrators had arms, Gairy would not still be there. I think they should get arms because it is the only way out. New Jewel Movement has the support of the vast majority of Grenadians.

About 10,000 people attended Mr. Bishop's funeral — it was really an anti-

Gairy demonstration. Before the funeral, some of Gairy's Secret Police went to the undertakers and demanded Mr. Bishop's body. They said they would drag it around the town. The taxi-drivers nearby surrounded them and threatened that no such thing would be allowed. The men left and said they would return with guns. After Mr. Bishop was shot they sliced his stomach with a cutlass.

I went to New Jewel meetings and I believe they could run the government of the country.

I had to bring back a prescription to London to get medicines for my family. You can't get medicine in Grenada. And there is no flour, no salt. A food shortage of disastrous proportions is current.

REVIEWS

Voices of the Living and the Dead
Linton Kwesi Johnson
Towards Racial Justice, 1974, 50p.

Linton Ah Sing King Alfa song in a strange land. It is the strange land that has transformed the song, from the ideal conception of the mystical lyric of the Rastafari, to the insistent rhythm of broken glass, blood and fire. The poetic voice of Linton Kwesi Johnson is a confluence of the rhetoric of the new blacks and echoes of voices from the English poetic tradition. It follows the rules of the game of versification in that it poses and frames the dialect of a tribe. A new tribe — 'young lions, youths of hope'.

The three poems in this slim volume are the coming to maturity of the rebellious prose of this tribe, like the poet, the children of the black workers from the Caribbean. The poems are libations to rebellion, a language at once hysterical, naked and romantic. A language which contains and transforms the verbal love affair that the several Caribbean cultures conduct with English. And yet within it, there is not only the inevitable imagery of the ghetto:

In the markets
flies had taken to the food
In our houses
cockroaches had taken to our beds.

There is also the unmistakable echo of the dramatic montage of Eliot:

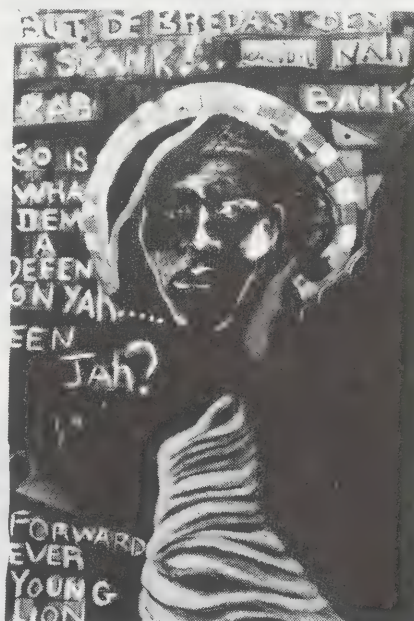
We will meet again
After the gathering of bones
At what time will that be my brother?
At the ripest season of the final hour
At what place will our meeting be my brother?
We will meet in the laughter of children's
eyes . . .

Surprisingly, the influences, ghetto and Eliot, go well together; they coalesce to produce a dramatic virility which has one thing to say and many ways of saying it. If we take the blurb that prefaces the book seriously, we must take it to mean that a poet born in the Caribbean, emigrating at the age of 10 or 11 to study sociology, is bound to write with the preoccupations and voice of Linton Johnson.

Voices of the Living and the Dead, a poem written for narrator and choruses, to the accompaniment of drums, bass guitar and flute, is the pronouncement of a faith. A simple faith 'let all men die for truth' it says, 'all rebel flesh is one flesh'. It gropes for an unspecified, if not uncertain history, a conviction that the living and the dead fortify and vindicate each other in their continuous struggle against 'Babylon'. It is the message of Reggae, and in a different way the message of a line of Caribbean poets from Aime Césaire to Edward Braithwaite. What does Linton add? Or better still, what does he strive to add? The experience of locality for his own audience — Brixton, Railton Road, Shepherds, the Telegraph, Sofrano B, Neville King . . . what are these? Ask any young black from London.

The poems have clearly chosen the vitality of emotive myth-making as opposed to the intellectual sinew that black American poets are wrestling to develop. A poetry of rebellion must have a target and Linton's verse identifies the enemy thus: 'Pot-bellied millionaires' . . . 'babylonian tyrants' . . . all 'who hasten to fortune on our backs'. The poems show no strain towards clearer ideological definition, they are content with singing 'a song for the armoury of our hearts'. The myth presumes the enemy, presumes also that the grass and the earth and the sky are in empathy with the heroes of the myth.

The importance of the myth is that it is a collective one. At the least one may say that it has contributed the first col-



Voices of the Living and the Dead

lective myth of English poetry for centuries, if one doesn't count pop and folk and all the other movements that exist as the property of a people or a class. It is, for instance, the power of reggae from which the biblical fullness and the fighting imagery of blood and wound and scar have been distilled into Linton's verse. With such rich parentage the verse has to be successful. The way in which it will be successful depends on whether Linton's poetry cannot only live within, but earn the love of the common people.

Farrukh Dhondy

Revolutionary Suicide
Huey P. Newton
Wildwood House Ltd, 1974, £1.95.

The language of dissent knows no national boundaries, and Huey Newton in his moving and eloquent testimony, *Revolutionary Suicide*, in no uncertain way strikes a responsive chord wherever the black presence, and wherever the voice of legitimate protest is heard. As the title of this graceful document indicates, the book is about the concept of revolutionary suicide, which according to the author, is an awareness of reality in combination with the possibility of hope — reality

because the revolutionary must always be prepared to face death, and hope because it symbolises a resolute determination to bring about change.

Having convincingly set the premise for his argument, Newton, co-founder with Bobby Seale of the Black Panther Party, then gives us a remarkable account of an American journey, a journey towards a new revolution. He sets the record straight about the Black Panther Party. Whatever its many enemies may say, the Party is not racist.

First, let us look at the self defence programme of the Panthers, because it is the picture of them, neatly dressed and fully armed, which is the only one most people, including blacks, have of them. The Party believes in self defence and it blossoms from the real grass roots of American life. Communal vigilantism was the mainspring of American life right from the time when the first European immigrants got to the big Northern cities. But the vigilantism of the Panthers was deficient. It was not defence against attacks from other immigrant groups — which was the result of the inactivity and corruption of the police force in the States. It was a defence against the police themselves, the symbols and instruments of white oppression and capitalism. In Newton's graphic language, it was instead the patrolling of the police by the Black Panthers. Yet as Newton so clearly shows, 'patrolling the police', by armed, organised and disciplined blacks was simply one part of an elaborate 10-point programme. It was a counter-force, a positive image of strong and unafraid black men in the community.

The emphasis on weapons was a necessary phase in our evolution, based on Frantz Fanon's contention that the people have to be shown that the colonizers and their agents — the police — are not bullet proof. We saw this action as a bold step in making our program known and raising the consciousness of the people. But we soon discovered that weapons and uniforms set us apart from the community. We were looked upon as an ad hoc military group, acting outside the community fabric and too radical to be part of it.

Perhaps some of our tactics at the time were extreme; perhaps we placed too much emphasis on military action. We saw ourselves as the revolutionary 'vanguard' and did not fully understand then that only the people can create the revolution . . . perhaps our military strategy was too much of 'a great leap forward'.

However, there is no doubt that that strategy brought the Party dedicated members, gained it the respect of the struggling peoples of the Third World, and, most importantly, raised the consciousness of black and white American citizens about the relationship between police and minorities. The Black Panther strategy definitely changed police relations with the black community in six short years.

Our communities are still not free from brutal incidents and corruption, but it is nonetheless true that police departments have become more sensitive to the problems of urban minorities. Today, it is a rare police commissioner who has not tried to establish some form of public

relations between police and blacks.

But, as Newton says, revolution is not an action; it is a process. Times change, and policies of the past are not necessarily effective in the present.

Our military strategies were not frozen. As conditions changed, so did our tactics. *Patrolling the community was only one step in our ten-point program and had never been regarded as the sole community endeavor of the Black Panther Party.*

The right to bear arms for protection appeared near the end of the Party's programme, as Point 7, and came only after those demands they considered far more urgent — freedom, employment, education and housing — all part of their *Survival*

that had such a dehumanizing effect on the community . . . In the school the 'system' was the teacher, but on the block the system was everything that was not a positive part of the community. My comrades on the block

We saw ourselves as the revolutionary 'vanguard' and did not fully understand then that only the people can create the revolution . . .

— Brother Huey
*Speaking about the
Black Panther Party*

continued to resist that authority, and I felt that I could not let college pull me away, no matter how attractive education was. These brothers had the sense of harmony and community I needed to maintain that part of myself not totally crushed by the schools and other authorities.

Newton did not let his education alienate him from the street brothers. In fact he first studied law — of which he had a good grasp — to become a better burglar and 'liberate' enough cash to gain a stretch of free time when he could stay at home and indulge in reading books like Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *The Devils*, Franz Kafka's *The Trial*, Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* and Albert Camus' *The Stranger* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*. In fact, Newton's greed for reading became and still is legendary.

Revolutionary Suicide is a manual of the life and struggle not only of its author and of the Black Panther Party; but of the hundreds of thousands of black Americans who daily suffer the indignities Newton so vividly describes and experienced. In the Epilogue he sums up his beliefs in these moving lines:

So many of my comrades are gone now. Some tight partners, crime partners, and brothers off the block are begging on the street. Others are in asylum, penitentiary, or grave. They all are suicides of one kind or another who had the sensitivity and tragic imagination to see the oppression. Some overcame; they are the revolutionary suicides. Others were reactionary suicides who either overestimated or underestimated the enemy, but in any case were powerless to change their conception of the oppressor.

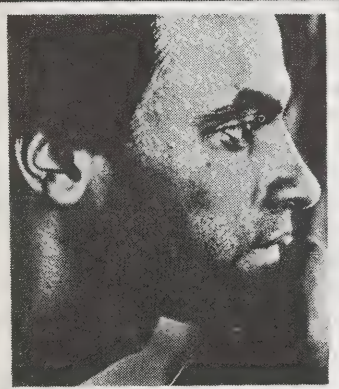
The difference lies in hope and desire. By hoping and desiring, the revolutionary suicide chooses life; he is, in the words of Nietzsche, 'an arrow of longing for another shore'. Both suicides despise tyranny, but the revolutionary is both a great despiser and a great adorer who longs for another shore. The reactionary suicide must learn, as his brother the revolutionary has learned, that the desert is not a circle. It is a spiral. When we have passed through the desert, nothing will be the same . . . The reactionary suicide is 'wise', and the revolutionary suicide is a 'fool', a fool for the revolution in the way that Paul meant when he spoke of being 'a fool for Christ'. That foolishness can move the mountain of oppression, it is our great leap and our commitment to the dead and the unborn.

We will touch god's heart; we will touch the people's heart, and together we will move the mountain.

A finer synopsis of life, of tears and of struggle there has seldom been.

Lionel Morrison

REVOLUTION



HUEY P. NEWTON

vival Programme. The American media presented the Panthers as a Party of the gun which appealed only to those who worshipped force and the power. And many blacks succumbed to this image. Eldridge Cleaver, according to Newton, is one such fall guy.

This book is an urgent reminder of just how aggressively the Black Panthers of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale abhor black racism and the cultural nationalism of some black separatists. Newton's stand is similar to Bobby Seale's, who so aptly stated in his memorable book *Seize the Time*, that:

Cultural nationalism will not educate people. It makes racists out of them. It is trying to popularise dashikis, the wearing of sandals and African dress. But power for the people doesn't grow out of the sleeve of a dashiki.

Yet, this does not mean they kowtow to white liberals who believe they know blacks better themselves and who mostly join forces with them as the bigger and all knowing brother.

This is a story of a self-made man, who grew up in the ghetto, who loved the brothers on the block, who never forgot them and closely identified with them. Here is how he looks at them:

I could not turn away from the life I shared with them. There was in them an intransigent hostility towards all those sources of authority

Advertisement



FERNDALE FIRES

A CHILDREN'S STORY

One of the drawings from *Ferndale Fires*, a children's story written by Chris Searle and the children from a primary school in Brixton.

The story contains a number of poems and songs written by the children, one of which has been set to music by Mel Robinson, who also did the drawings.

The story is based on the lives of a group of children in a tenement block in Brixton which suffers a series of accidental fires from paraffin stoves.

Ferndale Fires contains ten drawings and costs 25p + 5p postage; available from Centerprise Publications, 66a Dalston Lane, London E.8. Available now.

Merely A Matter Of Colour

Merely a Matter of Colour is an anthology of prose, poetry and play and novel extracts written by Uganda Asians. By bringing together the work of some of the best writers to come out of East Africa and juxtaposing them against children's essays and poems, the editors have provided an anthology which provides an insight into the problems of exile and race. This anthology, at 90p, is available from Q Books, 16 Hillersdon Ave, Edgware, Mdx.

AREA ROUND-UP

A monthly non-evaluative account of activity in race relations in all areas of the country. Drawn from the Institute of Race Relations' press cutting service of over 400 national and local newspapers.

Local News

Following the resignations of Tyne & Wear community relations council chairman and community relations officer, Newcastle councillors are to renew their backing for the crc, for the first time in two years. Newcastle was the one Tyne-side council which refused to help the crc when it fell into debt - one of the reasons behind the crc break-up and the resignations (*Journal* 14/1).

Prison tensions

Reports of racial tension inside Wakefield prison were dismissed by the Home Office as 'entirely wrong and without foundation'. The reports follow a stabbing at the prison which, it is believed, followed a period of tensions between white and 'coloured' prisoners (Liverpool Daily Post 29/12).

Statistics against statistics

Leicestershire Conservative Monday Club has accused Dr. Sayeed, a member of the local crc, of using statistics to back his claim that statistics on immigrants are not necessary. The secretary of the Club said: 'The Monday Club and others are not willing to be instructed by the likes of Mr. Sayeed . . . and we will continue to seek the eradication of the unjust evil that immigration can bring to aliens and nationals' (*Leicester Mercury* 21/12).

'Benign colonialism'

Luton cro Leslie Scafe has resigned following a rift with members of the crc. He says that one of the main causes of the split has been his concentration on black studies courses for the large local West Indian population. He claims that the crc is unrepresentative of racial groups in the town and has the image of 'benign colonialism' (*Guardian* 24/1).

London

Edgar Rennie, the Kensington & Chelsea Labour councillor who was dropped from the list to fight the next local elections, has resigned from the Labour Party. He intends to remain until May as an independent member of the council (*Kensington Post* 11/1). Another black councillor in the borough, Bill Morris, has also been dropped - he alleges 'below-the-belt tactics by fellow Labour member Cllr. Bob Pope' (*Kensington Post* 21/12).

Labour for 'the coloured man'

Brent Tory agent Kevin Moore has denounced Labour Party leaflets distributed in the area in Urdu and Gujarati as 'blatantly racist'. He claims that they say nothing of Labour's policies and plans but merely suggest that the Labour Party is 'the party of the coloured man'. He said: 'It is a pity they don't see fit to inform the rest of the borough in English what these leaflets are saying' (Willesden & Brent Chronicle 28/12).

More active interest wanted

Lambeth crc plans to have guest speakers, films and debates at future meetings, if members agree, 'to stimulate the rank-and-file members to take a more active interest' (*South London Press* 21/12).

Gas conversion complaints

Allegations that natural gas conversion teams in Balham are deliberately not converting Asian homes are completely untrue, according to the South Eastern Gas Board. But an executive member of Wandsworth crc says that all Asian, Irish and Jamaican homes in Fernlea Road have been left out of the conversions, and that many Asians homes are without heating and hot water (*Balham & Tooting News & Mercury* 14/1).

CRC and RRB

'A cabinet committee was expected to consider a recommendation by Lord Rothschild's Central Policy Review Staff that the Community Relations Commission and the Race Relations Board should merge', according to Peter Evans. He writes that CRC chairman Mark Bonham Carter has recently agreed to another three years service, whereas Sir Geoffrey Wilson, chairman of the Board, ends his term of office this year (*The Times* 23/1).

Unpopular Board

Bradford Tory MP John Wilkinson told the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration that ordinary people did not like the Board and that that antipathy would be increased if the Board's powers were widened. Wilkinson, a member of the Select Committee, was questioning Sir Geoffrey Wilson who had asked for wider powers (*Daily Telegraph* 25/1).

CRC accused of discrimination

A group of cros have accused the CRC of racial discrimination in its dealings with staff and appointments. The allegation is in a memorandum by the community relations group of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staff. The secretary of the group contrasts the treatment given to Dr. Alan Little, who is

white, with that given to two other staff members who are not. Chairman M Bonham Carter said that he did not think that community relations were assisted by personal attacks on colleagues, and if there was an objection to the way Little was appointed, then it was not a matter for which Little was responsible (*The Times* 22/1).

Education

A survey in Tyneside schools shows that 'some immigrant children did better than a similar number of white pupils', the former tended to stay on at school longer and more went on to higher education. Dr. J H Taylor, who did the research, thinks that part of the reason may lie in the 'warm close-knit family life' (*Evening Chronicle* 2/1).

Dispersal reconsidered

Blackburn's education committee is to consider its policy of dispersing immigrant children throughout the city's schools. This follows a report by a local teachers' group who feel that infants should attend schools nearest their homes. This view is supported by the local crc's executive, who have called for a 'phasing out' of the dispersal policy (*Lancashire Evening Telegraph* 7/1).

Muslim protests

14-year-old Kulsumbanu Patel, whose father is keeping her home rather than allow her to attend a mixed school, has been ordered by the Department of Education and Science to attend school. Mr. Patel says that he would rather face prison than obey this order (*Yorkshire Post* 27/12). He said that he had had 'messages from throughout the country telling me to fight. Race relations are being threatened by this test case' (*Daily Mirror* 27/12). Muslim leaders from all over Britain met at a meeting organised by the newly-formed Bradford Muslim Parents' Association in support of Mr. Patel. More than 200 fathers agreed to present a five-point plan to the local education services committee (*The Times* 7/1). Talks between Muslim leaders and education officials resulted in agreement over four of the points, but there was deadlock over the question of single sex schools (*Guardian* 8/1).

Truancy

The Inner London Education Authority has decided to extend its support for truant pupils 'who do not accept normal education'. An ILEA report states that the ideal would be to get the children back to school, but this cannot be done quickly or easily. The last survey carried out by the ILEA on the problem of truancy was

in 1971 and the figures were 'especially disturbing for North Kensington and in particular the immigrant areas' (Kensington Post 11/1).

Employment

Camden crc has asked the local council to commission an inquiry to check if building contractors discriminate against black workers when working on council contracts. Cllr. Millie Miller said that the crc already had the money to launch such an inquiry (*Kilburn Times* 4/1).

Housing

'Women, Alone and Homeless', a report published by Crisis at Christmas campaign, states: 'All the agencies helping girls had a fair case load of West Indian girls who had left home or had been forced to leave home. There may be as many as a thousand of these second generation immigrants adrift in London' (*East Anglian Daily Times* 17/12).

Police

Immigrant organisations in Brent are to receive booklets outlining the police powers under the law. This is being distributed by the police and the local crc in an attempt to improve police-immigrant relations (*Daily Telegraph* 15/1).

Special constables

There has been 'a trickle of interest' from the black community in Lambeth to apply to become Special Constables in the new recruitment drive launched by the Metropolitan Police (South London Press 11/1).

Brockley station stays closed

A late move by Lewisham council has failed to get Brockley police station re-opened. Council members met police representatives to discuss the matter because of the concern about policing in the area. Brockley, 'the scene of police-immigrant troubles in the past', is now covered by Lewisham police station. A Brockley councillor said that they wished to be consulted about any future changes in policing in the borough (*South London Press* 18/1).

Immigration

In 1974 Britain will increase its intake of Asians from Tanzania and Kenya from 7,000 to 12,000 (*Sunday Telegraph* 13/1).

Illegal immigration . . .

India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have been told that unless illegal immigration to Britain is drastically reduced, there can be no speed-up of the rate at which dependants are given entry vouchers. This was said during Home Office under-secretary David Lane's ten-day tour of the Indian sub-continent (*Daily Telegraph* 22/1).

. . . assurances questioned

The validity 'of the numerous assurances given by the Home Secretary' that there would be no witch hunt of illegal immigrants is now being questioned by welfare and immigrant organisations and Lord Avebury, who has received a letter from the Home Office which conflicts with the assurances. The letter states: 'Chief officers of police have the responsibility for the operational activities of their force and are not subject to ministerial control in enforcing the law.' Cros in areas where two of the recent illegal immigrant raids were made said that this letter implies no control over the police by the Home Secretary (*Morning Star* 28/12). Camden council leader Frank Dobson has written to the Home Secretary describing the raids on Asian homes in Bloomsbury as smacking of a police state (*Islington Journal* 21/12).

Passport checks

A government plan to force some black people to show their passports when applying for a national insurance card was condemned in the House of Commons. But Sir Keith Joseph claimed that a scheme had already worked successfully in the Midlands and said that the procedure 'would be applied in those areas of the country where difficulties arose over the accuracy of immigrants' personal particulars' (*Morning Star* 23/1).

Citizenship

The Home Office has received about 46,000 applications for British citizenship from Pakistanis since the Pakistan Act came into force. In a written reply to MP Cyril Smith, David Lane, Home Office, said that 6,300 grants of registration had been completed (*Glasgow Herald* 22/12).

Advice

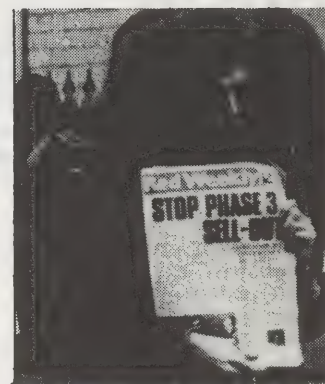
Prospective immigrants in Pakistan are to be offered advice on immigration by an office, financed by Pakistanis already living here to run in close liaison with the United Kingdom Immigrants' Advisory Service (*Yorkshire Post* 12/1).

Ugandan Asians

According to Sir Charles Cunningham, chairman of the Ugandan Resettlement Board, of the 12,000 Ugandan Asians registered for work, most of them 'are making a go of things'. He said that they were enterprising people, already beginning to 'move up the ladder' (*Evening Gazette* 11/1). Welfare worker Michael Ward disputed the Board's claim that the Ugandan Asians had been resettled adequately. He said: 'The present economic situation means that things are that much worse for everybody, and will remain so for the Asians' (*Leicester Mercury* 11/1).

The last of the resettlement centres, at West Malling, Kent, has closed (*Evening Standard* 15/1).

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1973

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February : Holland's 'Red Niggers'.

March : Blacks and the British Army.

April : Our E.S.N. Children.Special Report.

May : Racism by Post.

June : The Deportation Business Special Report. Avis Brown : The Colony of the Colonised (Race,sex and class)

July : Single black mothers. Racism and school text-books.

August : Black People and Trades Unions Special Report.

September : Race and Intelligence : Debunking the I.Q. Myth

October/November : Books,Libraries and Racism Special Report.

December : Black People and the Police. Special Report.

1974

January : Race,Sex and Working Class Power by Selma James

February : The Black Explosion in Schools by Farrukh Dhondy.

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requires an Assistant Community Worker for its Neighbourhood Centre at 172 Lavender Hill, S.W.11.

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SCOPE SOUTHALL

urgently needs some second-hand typewriters, a duplicator and some office equipment. Please have a look around and perhaps you can help a community project to start. Please drop a line to Ravi Jain or Susan Hufton, 32 High Street Southall, Middlesex, 01-574 1693. We would like to arrange collection.

" VOICES OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD "

A book of poems by Linton Kwesi Johnson. *Voices* was first performed at the Keskidee Centre in June 1973. *Youths of Hope* and *Five Nights of Bleeding* have appeared in earlier issues of this magazine.

He is one of the growing body of young West Indian artists whose creative instincts have been sharpened by the experiences of the first generation of West Indian youth to be educated in Britain.

Priced at 50p, copies are obtainable at a few bookshops or direct from Towards Racial Justice : 184,King's Cross Road, London W.C.1.

CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the April issue is Wednesday 25 February.

Every Tuesday

8.30 p.m.

Black Voices: a politico-cultural platform for artists, poets and speakers from the Third World at The Troubadour, 265 Old Brompton Road, London S.W.5. Admission free.

February

Boseman and Lena, starring Aphol Fugard and Yvonne Bryceland at Paris Pullman, Drayton Gardens, S.W.10. The film is a brilliant condemnation of racism in South Africa. For further details, phone 01-373 5898.

9 onwards, Mon.-Fri. 7.30 p.m., Sat. 5.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.

Sizwe Bansi is Dead, The Island, Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act — three plays by Aphol Fugard at the Royal Court, Sloane Square, London, S.W.1., phone 01-730 5174.

14 8 p.m.

A Trade Union for the Third World: topical film by Jonathan Power about the bargaining power of producers of raw materials, at the Prince Albert pub, Pembridge Road, Notting Hill Gate. Admission free.

14 7.30 p.m.

Living Through the Crisis: Women in Ireland and Britain, a public meeting with speakers, including housewives from Ireland and a film *Women of the Rbondda*, at the Lord Palmerston 308 Kilburn High Road, London N.W.6. Organised by the Power of Women collective.

14-15

Conference on Islam in Africa where papers will be presented with particular reference to Islam in Africa south of the Sahara. Further details from the Africa Centre, King Street, London W.C.2., phone 01-836 1974.

20 7.30 p.m.

S top the Apartheid Rugby Tour, a public meeting at Caxton Hall. Speakers include John Taylor (Welsh International Rugby player), Mike Terry, Peter Hain, Rt. Rev. D. Sheppard, For further details contact Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte St., W.1.

24

Fundraising event for Anti-Apartheid with George Melly and Georgie Fame at Dingwalls Dance Hall, Chalk Farm. Tickets £2.50 and further details from Anti-Apartheid Movement.

March

8-9

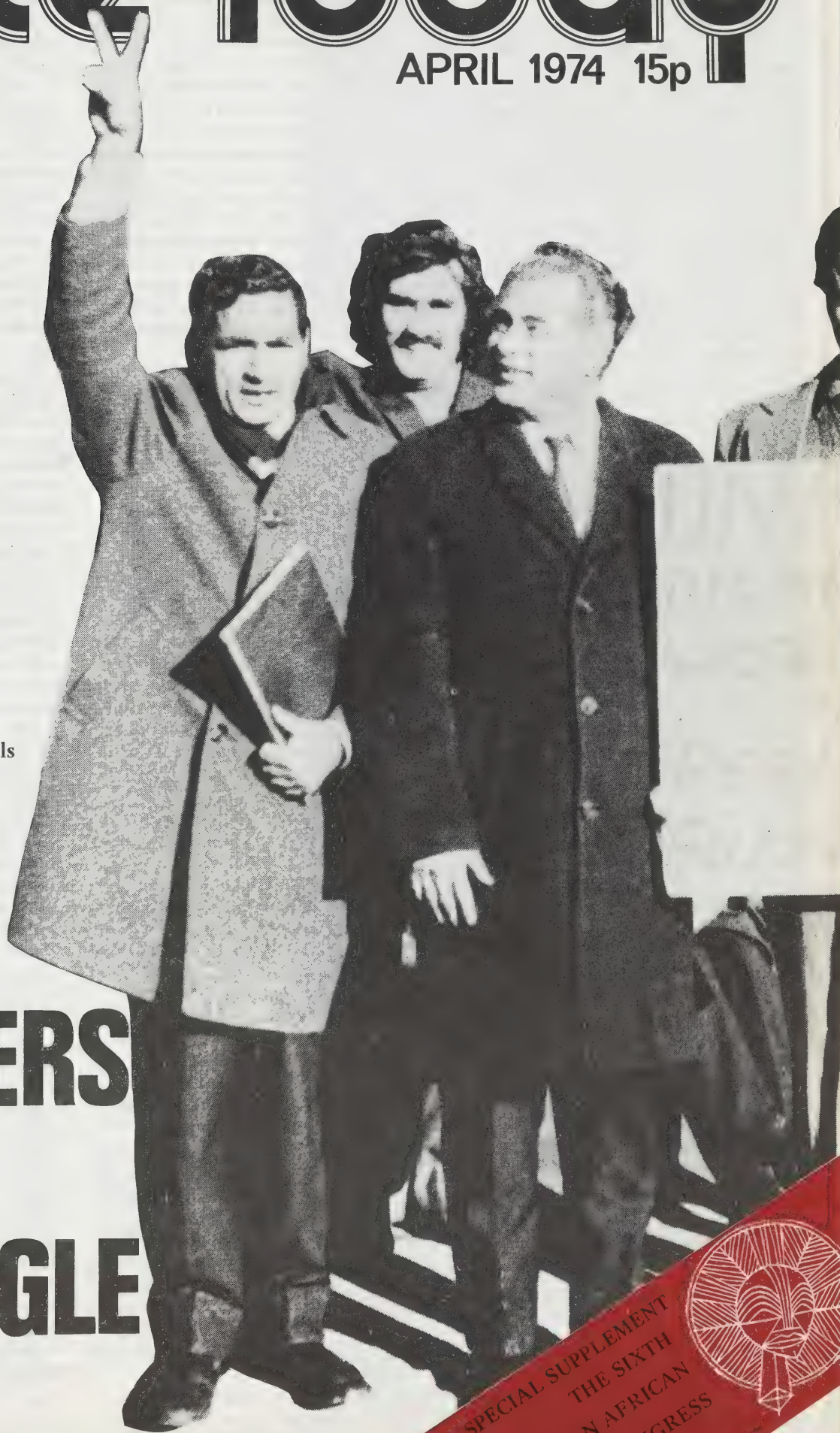
Study weekend with poetry reading and lectures on *George Jackson* and *Amilcar Cabral* at Polytechnic of Central London, 104-108 Bolsover Street, London W.1., phone 01-636 4991.

9 2 p.m.- 10 p.m.

Migration, The New Slave Trade, a film festival featuring *The Mangrove 9, The Money Order, Black Girl*, and other films and speakers at International Student House, 1-6 Park Crescent, London W.1. Entrance 60p. Sponsored by Haslemere and Returned Volunteer Section.

Race Today

APRIL 1974 15p



The Black Explosion in Schools
South Africa and the TUC
Martinique: Anti-Colonial
Rebellion
Trinidad: Sugar Workers'
Intervention

ASIAN WORKERS IN STRUGGLE

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
THE SIXTH
PAN AFRICAN
CONGRESS



LETTERS

From the Perivale Workers

Sir,

I am really so much touched by two articles subscribed by you on the cause of my fellow workers here, which have been published in February and March 1974 issues of your monthly *Race Today*. I can't find words to express my gratitude to the editorial staff of *Race Today* on behalf of my fellow brothers for your interest in us at your own initiative. Perhaps it has been due to this ugly dispute and, as a result of it our untold sufferings, that we have been able to know that there are also people and organisations like *Race Today* who are so good and bold enough to present and advocate the case of helpless people like us who have been brought down to a catastrophic situation as a result of being subjected to an open victimisation by the brutal and dictatorial act of the management of the Perivale Guttermann Ltd.

We see a light — a light in the darkness. We now realise that we are not alone in our sufferings. We are made to believe who are good enough to convince us that they accept the reality, that the human beings are after all human beings, and the pains arising out of sufferings are equal and similar to all of them, whatever their origin, race or colour might be. This realisation by you is a great consolation to us and for that we thank you very much. Of course, this is perhaps, more particularly in the face of the attitude of the national press of the country, who know every bit about our hardships because we have done our best to keep them informed, but disappointingly to us, they have almost blacked us out — why? Maybe perhaps! We are black or coloured, or I don't know the reason.

It is for more than ten weeks now that we are on the road in this biting cold, without any resources whatsoever. Yes, of course, we are aware of our weakness. We have no material resources. We are hand to mouth. Our colour is coloured. The people who want to crush us (our employer), they have got so many benefits upon us. They have got the money — they have got the material resources. And on top of that, they are not coloured — perhaps they are colourless. But yet, we know one thing for certain — that we are on the right side, because we are the victims.

The other side is proud of the abundance that they have got at their disposal. We are humble, because we have got nothing at our disposal except the truth. We are open, even to starvation, but yet we are determined not to submit to a wrong because we firmly believe that a submission to a deliberate wrong and a naked act of cruelty will be an act of

cowardice.

We really feel aggrieved that we have not been able to enlist the support of our fellow workers in the vicinity, but it does not mean that we are going to let them down. We don't like to be accused by the others of our stock, that we were responsible for the establishment of a precedent which later on could be used by other employers to crush them like us here.

We are living in a democratic society. We are living in the country which is governed by the rule of law, where there is equality. We don't want anything more than that we should also get equal treatment. We want our right place in the society. It is for that we are struggling, and we will continue our struggle at all costs.

Aslam Khan
Chief Shop Steward T&GWU, Branch 1/1507
39 Dane Road,
Southall Middlesex

In Defence of British Workers

Sir,

So much of the March issue of *Race Today* was so good that it was a shock when I read in the editorial: 'The Movement for Colonial Freedom, the Communist Party, the Labour Party . . . have managed to label the struggles of colonial workers against British capital as foreign, thereby denying the white working class valuable experiences.'

Was I dreaming? How did we 'manage to label' liberation struggles against British imperialism as 'foreign'? When did we ever use the word 'foreign' in this connection?

The Communist Party was the first in the very early days to stress the common struggles of Indian and British workers against imperialism and to assist the great textile strikes in India. R. Palme Dutt in his famous book *British Crisis — Crisis of Empire* shows precisely the links between national liberation struggles and the struggle for socialism in Britain.

How can Jack Woodis's three books on Africa — *Roots of Revolt*, *The Lion Awakes* and *The Way Ahead* — be said to be denying the white working class 'valuable experiences'? On the contrary, no book more effectively opened up understanding of Africa's struggles to them.

Marxists have also done a great deal to expose the nature of the British capitalist state. Where in Marxist literature has there been any talk of the 'nice bobby'?

I should be unhappy if I thought, as I should according to the editor, that by working for nearly 20 years in MCF (now Liberation), I have been denying British workers the knowledge and understanding of the struggles against imperialism. Fortunately, I think most of those who have fought hardest against imperialism

in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean know that no organisation has done more than MCF to inform white workers of what British imperialism means and develop solidarity with struggles against it.

Of course, we have not done enough but that is quite different from saying that what we have done 'denies white workers valuable experiences'. It seems as if the editor is so afraid of finding any allies among white people that he must stand truth on its head to prove that none exists. I feel that this is a self-defeating procedure.

Kay Beauchamp
45 Clissold Court
London N.4.

Home Office Labour Camps

Sir,

George Phillip and Sonny Fearon are living somewhere near Barnsley; and so is Max Farrar and his pro-black, pro-working class revolution. But in as much as I know that Max Farrar and his Chapeltown community exists, I also know that George Phillips and Sonny Fearon certainly do not. For since Max Farrar is sure enough that these two black men are 'Agents of the Home Office', agents who will crack the whip across the back of black youths, to make them work, to destroy their potential for rebellion, then he may as well get the names of these two black agents correct. Canitz Phillip and Joshua Fearon.

The issue, as I see it, is a simple one. There are a lot of black youths, who for one reason or another, are unemployed. In the case of Chapeltown, my job is to work with youths who would like to work. Whether these youths are black or white is irrelevant; obviously, the group will be largely black, as Chapeltown is largely populated with black people. This group's main (primary) function is to work in their own community, for the benefit of the community.

The Chapeltown Community Association, representing also the Management for the Chapeltown Adventure Playground, was approached and asked if we may help them to build the fence for the play ground. This is Chapeltown's chiefest project set up over a year ago. There is little else in Chapeltown: the Community Centre, it is said, will be opened in April of 1974. The Adventure Playground is still barren waste land. The Adventure Playground representatives started building the fence on 16 February 1974. Three weeks earlier, they refused the help of Community Industry. The committee consisted of, to coin a phrase, 'Four young White politicians and a Black man with his heart in the right Place', hardly representative of the community. (Letters continued on p. 127.)

EDITORIAL

The Asian Worker

In a short document called *A Workers' Enquiry*, Karl Marx set down a hundred questions to be asked of every worker. He saw the significance of workers directly relating their experiences in the following light:

We hope to meet in this work with the support of all workers in town and country who understand *that they alone can describe with full knowledge* the misfortunes from which they suffer and that they and not saviours sent by providence can energetically apply the healing remedies for the social ills to which they are a prey . . . We also rely upon socialists of all schools who, being wishful for social reform must wish for an *exact and positive* knowledge of the conditions in which the working class — the class to whom the future belongs — works and moves. (our italics)

This 'exact and positive knowledge' we have sought to record in a series of interviews with Asian workers in manufacturing industries throughout Britain. This section of the working class has been involved in successive strike actions in the past five years which now threaten to develop into a cohesive and powerful mass movement of Asian workers. Lord Rothschild's recommendations to the Home Office on the race question in Britain identified this phenomenon as worthy of serious State attention. The value of these interviews lies in the fact that they chart with a precision and clarity the historical process involved in the span — from peasant to industrial worker. They reveal the day-to-day struggles of the Asians on their introduction (in most cases for the first time) to factory life, their customs, their values, their ideas, hopes, aspirations and fears. We can derive from them how the Asians have attempted to overcome the tremendous barriers placed in their way, have sought to deal with the hostility of the indigenous population and how they have used the accumulated history of the Asian peasantry as a weapon in their struggles against capital.

Introduced to factory life from the small farm in Asia, we are told that the Pakistani worker saw his employer 'as someone big who could do a lot of things to people'; that the wages of white workers were kept a secret from them; that £9.10 for 60 hours was viewed as a reasonable wage. The Asians had to find their way in the vast political organisation that is the factory floor, arriving at new conceptions of themselves and their relations with others; in short, discovering their own power. This process cannot be viewed as taking place in isolation from all that was going on around them. For instance, they would surely experience and note the power exercised by the white workers against management in relation to which they could assess their own actual and potential power. From the interviews, it emerges that they drawn from the fact that they (the white workers) were organised into trade unions. A movement of Asian workers into trade unions was a direct consequence of this. The trade unions proved to be the opposite of what they expected, which has been the experience of white workers as well.

The dilemma of the Asian workers is how they preserve their interest in the face of opposition from white workers, management and the unions. What kind of organisation do they put in the place of the trade union? The main issues are two — the struggle to work less (the shortening of the working week) and the reduction of the intensity of the actual work. One of the workers interviewed points to a solution. He sees as possible an organisation of workers wherever there are more than fifty Asians working, linked to other Asian workers by a central body of representatives and linking the factory with the community. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that the revolutionary implications of his suggestion — and consequently the revolutionary actuality and potential of the Asian working class — was first identified by Lord Rothschild, the architect of the counter-revolution against blacks in Britain.

Darcus Howe

Race Today

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BETWEEN THE LINES

The Union and the Police: (cont.)

The strike of Asian workers at Coventry Art Castings, reported in the March 1974 issue of *Race Today*, has moved into its third month and remains solid. The strike started at the beginning of December after management refused to negotiate with the workers over a demand for higher wages and shorter hours — 40 instead of the 60 and 80 the Asian workers were putting in. The works is one of four shops which comprise the A.L. Dunne operation, producing components for the car factories of Ford, Chrysler, Morris and Standard Triumph.

Management have tried inviting the Asian workers back by ones and twos, but they are refusing to return in this way, and demand that they all be taken back or none at all. Pickets have been active at the gates all the way through and Satnam Gill, the chairman of Shop Stewards, estimates that production at the factory is now down to 20 per cent of normal.

The police have been active on the picket lines, and insist on the minimum number of pickets. As we went to press,

more pickets had been arrested and Gill himself was pulled up and taken to the police station. After five hours of questioning, he was charged under the 1875 Conspiracy Acts for following one of the scab lorries to another factory. The total arrested during the dispute is now well into double figures, and the police have taken to bringing the dogs down to the picket line to intimidate the workers. The men claim the police have been behaving in a very hard and racist fashion in an attempt to frighten them off the picket line.

The Transport and General has at last made the strike official and the men are now getting £5.00 a week strike pay. Married men are also entitled to social security for their children. There have been collections in one or two other factories, notably Rolls Royce and Chrysler, but from few others.

The men are determined to win and feeling is very strong despite the apathy of the support from fellow white workers. The strike drags on but the men have dug in for a long battle. Messages of support and donations to: Coventry Art Castings Strike Committee, 72 Churchill Avenue, Coventry CV6 5JR.

The New IRR

Over the last two years, the Institute of Race Relations has lost most of its traditional financial backing, and found a new exciting sharpness in the process. The struggle, which originated in the old Jermyn Street headquarters in the spring of 1972, has now finalised and that phase is over forever.

Now there are new plans. Part of the work of the last two years has been the holding of seminars and discussion groups in which the problems of racism and imperialism in the Third World have been discussed by Third World people themselves. Much of what has been started has merely shown how necessary is a centre where racism and imperialism can be studied outside the confines of government and academia. Such a place is what the Institute has become.

Much of the financial backing of the old days has dropped away, and inevitably, the staff of the Institute has had to be cut back. But volunteer workers are now coming in to take their place and maintain the services. The superb library, with its unique cuttings, pamphlets and unparalleled collection of books and periodicals, will remain open. *Race*, the academic quarterly, is itself moving towards a radical sociology. And the books published in the last two years have had immediate relevance to the problems of migrant workers and Third World people in the metropolitan countries.

In February, a new chairman, John La Rose, was appointed in place of the Rev. Wilfred Wood who, over the last two years gave of himself unstintingly, did much to make the Institute sensitive to the needs of minorities and to lay the

foundations for the present development. He has now taken over a new parish in South London.

La Rose, a West Indian poet and book-seller, has brought fresh ideas to the Institute and will be closely involved in the new perspectives. Much of the work and resources of the Institute will now be taken out to the community, reflecting and building on the grass roots support that has built up over the last twelve months.

With the loss of the money from industry and commerce, new avenues of support are being explored. The Institute has certain grants and continuing income from trusts which will keep it ticking over for a while, but in addition, appeals are being made for support from the community on a broad front. A programme and policy are being prepared, and from these a mass membership drive will be launched. In addition to that, certain university unions are starting to contribute: Manchester University Union has donated £99 and York has taken out corporate membership and a guaranteed annual sum of £100. Currently, similar support is being canvassed in other university and polytechnic unions. In another direction, Camden Council is giving £500 towards the support of the library, and the World Council of Churches has donated over £2,000 to the struggle against racism.

So, while the financial future is more austere than the past, the work will continue and expand in its new relevance. An exciting prospect is ahead.

Further information is available from The Secretary, Institute of Race Relations, 247-249 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS

"VOICES OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD"

A book of poems by Linton Kwesi Johnson. *Voices* was first performed at the Keskidee Centre in June 1973. *Youths of Hope* and *Five Nights of Bleeding* have appeared in earlier issues of this magazine.

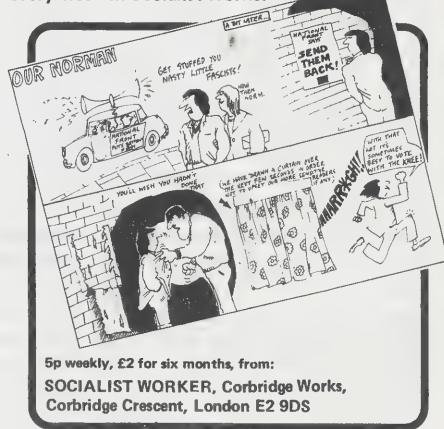
He is one of the growing body of young West Indian artists whose creative instincts have been sharpened by the experiences of the first generation of West Indian youth to be educated in Britain.

Priced at 50p, copies are obtainable at a few bookshops or direct from Towards Racial Justice: 184, King's Cross Road, London W.C.1.

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Story by A. Sivanandan.

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Two years ago *Race Today* halved its price from 20p to 10p. Since that time, costs have risen enormously and look likely to continue that way. Reluctantly, therefore, we have had to raise our cover price to 15p from this issue on. The annual subscription (which is still the most reliable way of seeing every copy) will now be £2.00 per annum for British subscribers, and £3.00 for international subscribers.

The regular feature 'Area Round Up' has been dropped this month to make way for the important news feature from the Caribbean. It will be returning in future.



Delegates from a number of organisations representing the 'Untouchable' community in Britain met at the Institute of Race Relations in the middle of February to discuss setting up an International Conference to Eradicate Untouchability. The meeting set up a working committee to organise the Conference later this year in London.

Ealing School Rumpus

In the last month, five pupils have been suspended by the Headmaster of Featherstone School in Ealing. Police have been called into the school on two occasions to deal with children, an entertainment prepared by black students which accurately reflected life in the Caribbean was first cancelled and then placed in an impossible time slot first thing in the morning, and a delegation of parents and workers from the Afro-Caribbean Society and Indian Workers' Association was ignored by the Headmaster.

Marilyn Flanders, a sixteen year old pupil, has been suspended three times. In the past, she had hit a teacher who picked on her brother, and there had been a constant coming and going between her home and the school. On the final occasion, she was suspended for not bringing her plimsolls in for a P.T. lesson, and the police were called to evict her. Two constables turned up, took her down to the police station and threatened to lock her up. After that incident, it was three weeks before anyone came down from the education office to see what was going on.

Stokely Charles, who his teachers describe as a lad with a great deal of potential, has also been suspended three times. Once he told Mr. Berg to 'sod off', on another occasion he was suspended for apparently being rude to Mr. Berg after a football game, and on the third occasion he was suspended for telling Mr. Berg not to be rude to him. Stokely's father says the headmaster won't give him a fair hearing and that he's not acting like a headmaster should.

Stanford Ogiste fought back when a master attempted to cane him after a jostle in the school hall. He was suspended by the headmaster after his mother told him to go back to school. Six months ago, Dean Nelson was suspended for telling a teacher, 'Don't touch my black

and beautiful body', and Steven Alexis was suspended in January for hitting a master after he had pulled a chair away from under him. Alexis was told to read out a letter of apology in front of the entire school and to fix up the school gardens at the weekends.

It was the Alexis case that prompted some of the older pupils to go on a delegation to the Town Hall and call for the removal of Alfred Berg. And it was after Charles had gone back to school in defiance of the headmaster in February that senior pupils started talking seriously of striking until he was taken back. The community relations workers think of complaining to the Race Relations Board.

Parents and children, staff and outsiders, all differ in their views of the headmaster from 'brutal and authoritarian' at worst to 'culturally insensitive' at best. He has been at the school for four years and succeeded a previous headmaster who claimed that he had 64 children incapable of learning anything. If the antecedents weren't good, Berg's peculiar mixture of permissiveness, authoritarianism and a willingness to take the world's problems on his shoulders alone, has led to complaints that he lectures everyone, children, staff and parents alike. Featherstone is one of the few schools in Ealing which doesn't bus its children in and out every day according to the colour of their skin. Instead it's a lively, vibrant place which draws its children from the surrounding community. But in many ways it's not so much a community school as a school authority in opposition to the community.

Ealing education office has little comment to make other than that suspensions are a regular occurrence in all the borough's schools and a private matter between head, governors and parents. While the borough slumbers, the children are rumbling.

Carol & the Council

Members of the black community in North London have formed a committee and intervened in the case of Carol Carter, a 30 year old West Indian mother who has been a tenant on the Campsbourne estate for a year. During this time she has been the victim of constant harassment by her white neighbours. As a result the police intervened on 9 June 1973 and she was arrested and confined to Friern Barnet mental hospital for three days. She has taken proceedings against the police for wrongful arrest and false imprisonment.

At that time various attempts were made by community organisations involved in the case to conciliate between her and her neighbours. The council offered her alternative accommodation which she refused, stating she had a right to live on that estate. Meanwhile, the acts of harassment continued against her. On 8 February she received a letter from the housing department of Haringey Council offering her alternative accommodation, away from Campsbourne estate, and stating that only one more offer would be made. In the event of her refusing it, the Council would take vacant possession of her present home.

A meeting of community groups held on 21 February drew up a petition to hand in to David Page, Housing Committee Chairman. The following demands were made

1. that the threatening letter from the Council be withdrawn;
2. that a reconciliation meeting between the tenants immediately concerned be held which should be attended by representatives from the Committee, Councillor Silverstone, Chairman of the Housing Management Committee, and David Page;
3. that in the event of there being no reconciliation possible between all parties, then all the tenants should be moved — not only Carol Carter.

They are awaiting Page's response.



Angela Phillips

72-year-old Blanche Johnson, whose forcible eviction from her home in Mornington Crescent, Camden Town, was stopped by the angry intervention of fellow tenants. They occupied the offices of Prebble and Company, North London estate agents and by the time police had thrown them out had loudly pointed out that the house, although apparently belonging to Lansdowne Securities had been bought by the council. Miss Johnson's home was safe, for the time being.

NEWS BACKGROUND

Asian Workers In Struggle

Over the last twelve months, this magazine has focussed on a number of industrial struggles in which black workers have been to the forefront. In this month's extended News Background, we attempt to convey the reality of struggle through the eyes of a section of the protagonists, male Indian and Pakistani workers in manufacturing industries. In future issues, we shall hear from other sections of the black working class in struggle.



Sarwan Singh

Sarwan Singh came from the Punjab in 1958 at the age of 14. He lives in Bradford and is now a publican.

I came to England with my mother to join my father who was already here in Bradford. I went to school for a year but didn't learn anything, I wasted my time there. I didn't learn even a single word of English. Then I got my first job as a jobber, for £2.16s a week. My English wasn't good, but it was enough for the employers. They didn't want to know about your problem, they just wanted to show you how to work, and the machine does that for itself. But I only stayed a year. The pay wasn't enough and there was nothing to achieve, I'd taken the job because I thought when I'd been there for five years I'd be an overlooker. But then I saw they gave preference to the English lads. I went to another firm, in textiles, as a machine operator for £5 a week. I stayed three years, but again there was nothing to achieve, not enough pay, and again they passed me over for a job as an overlooker. I had thought when I joined industry that I must learn something and not just operate a machine all my life.

I went to another textile firm, Regina Cotton. In that job I had a lot of trouble with an overlooker when I wasn't paid extra time. It was sorted out, but I left as I knew he'd be prejudiced with me — try to sack me or something. Anyway I was getting married and did not like to work nights then, so I changed and got a job at Croft Engineering in steel. They promised me a skilled moulding job, but instead they put me in a crane. It was all right but so smokey that I had to leave and have an operation on my nose. I went back to work in textiles for eighteen months until I opened a shop with my four brothers. When it was settled, my sister-in-law ran the counter and I went back into textiles for a bit and then I got this pub. I'm a tenant here.

During my time in industry I felt what was right and what was wrong. I found out how management behaves differently to coloured workers than to whites. Sometimes you can say it's a minor thing, but it shows differences, like the way

they order us about, and you can tell they're thinking we're inferior. And they use this to divide workers.

Like one firm I was working at in Dewsbury. They told us — they didn't ask us first — that they had made separate toilets for coloured workers. Now there are differences, different language, different culture, different everything. If we go very deep, we come from a situation entirely opposite to that in England. Here everything is organised — England is a developed country, an industrial country, everybody is economically independent, even the unemployed. But in India we are economically dependent so we always depend on others. And our people here, because they're in a developed country, their ways may have disgusted some people. But instead of consulting with us, they make a separate toilet and create separation between the workers and then say it's for our benefit. Some white workers start saying: 'Hey, your toilet is separate, everything is going to be separate, your bus, your canteen.' We soon found out that's wrong, and there were two or three white workers with us, that makes it better for us. We were glad we'd got some white workers with us and we told management that we'd stop work until anyone could go in any toilet. So they abolished separate toilets. But from then on there was still separation between us and the white workers.

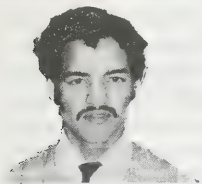
The trouble is that the white workers think it is the coloured workers who try and make division. But it is created from the top of the monster or whatever you call it. Like the present crisis. Some white people think it's caused by the coloured people that came into the country. We have to convince them that it is not true. I always start thinking about things from a class angle or an economic angle so I know that the current situation

is because capitalism is in economic crisis internationally. And it is affecting the workers. Before when they joined a union they just joined, they were never active or taking initiative and so it was always the puppets of firms or other shop stewards who took the leadership. But now workers are changing because when wages go up, prices go up and there is no value in the wages. With people on a three-day week it is hard to live.

In my pub there is always talk about the miners, and support for them. They say they should be paid more money, which is something new because some of my customers are agriculturists, not workers. Once when I was working in a firm there were some Indian workers working in the furnace for over ten years and when I tried to convince them to join the union they said: 'No, only workers join unions. We are peasants, agriculturalists.' But I know this is changing because they have had to get involved with the problems here at work and with their children growing up here. Before they used to talk about what was happening in India and sending their money there and building a house. Now they are talking more about the problems here, of Indian workers, of what happens to them in the pubs and factories and problems like the miners and the election. They are interested now but what happens depends on how the situation keeps going. Some Indian workers talk about forming separate unions. I am against creating separatism; we must struggle and we must unite.

"Division is created from the top of the monster"

"They used to talk about India ... now it's about the problems here"



Musstaq Hussain

Musstaq Hussain was 13 years old when he arrived in Britain from Azad Kashmir in Pakistan. Now he is 24 and working in the textile industry in Nottingham. My family were small farmers and my father left to work in England in 1952. The family joined him in 1963 and although I couldn't speak a word of English, I picked it up by meeting people. I had a little education in Pakistan, but when I left school in Nottingham at 15 I couldn't understand English properly. My father was not educated at all — even now he can hardly speak English. He wanted me to stay on at school and learn, but I couldn't see what good an education would do me. I wanted to earn some money.

I couldn't get a job through the youth employment service because I couldn't speak English. So I found a job for myself with a small firm 12 miles away as a machine operator. I earned £4.00 a week, but by the time I had paid my bus fares I had only a little money left. After six months I went to the same firm as my father as a messenger boy, but I wasn't learning anything. I then worked in a couple of textile mills.

It wasn't until I was about 18 that I realised that we are discriminated against and not being treated the same as a white person. They were using us as cheap labour: for example there is a certain firm where I worked where they were paying our people less than the white workers. We used to work twelve hours and they paid us the flat rate with no overtime. They supplied the white workers with an electric kettle and wouldn't allow us to use it, and their wage rates were kept secret from us. Later on, when we had a dispute, the white workers started running our machines. There were things like that.

When I was 18, I went to work for Jaffe's and then I went to Harwood Cash for a year and a half. There they made us work 60 hours and we got the same basic as the whites got for 40 hours. At that time, I didn't have the courage to stand up against the employer because they used to say: 'If you don't like it, you can take your cards and go.' So most of us drifted away. I went back to Jaffe's for a year, and then I went back to Pakistan for six months.

My family arranged for my marriage while I was there. I came back in 1972 but my wife had to wait six months for the British authorities to grant her an entry certificate. I started back with Jaffe and he told me that I could work as an operator but he would make me an over-looker or foreman soon.

All the workers were Pakistani and at first, they thought of him not as an employer but as someone big who could do a lot of things to people. Everyone was divided in that factory, one would be getting 30p and another 35p per hour.

He said he was doing us a favour letting us work there, and later on we realised he wasn't doing us any favours, he should have been paying us the same as any English workers.

In 1972, there were Asians in another small factory, Crepes Sizes, in Nottingham where they were being discriminated against. They formed a union to protest about being treated as cheap labour because they had to work 60 hours and the white workers 40 hours. They held a strike, and it was a shock to us because we never knew anything like that in our community. The strike lasted only two weeks and we asked friends who worked there what had happened. They told us to join the union so one by one we all quietly joined. All the labourers and unskilled grades in our factory were Asians and they elected me shop steward. So we asked the T&GWU to go and see Mr. Jaffe. Then he said that if I stopped being shop steward he would make me the foreman, but I told him I had wanted promotion earlier and he hadn't done anything about it. Now it was too late and I would stick with the men because I didn't want to be on his side. We all stuck together, and we started negotiating: he would pay us all different rates and different hours and we were confused. So we complained about that, and about a white lady working for management who called us names, and about never replacing the light bulb in our toilet and providing us with gas to make tea with. After ten months of negotiating, we never got anywhere, and during that time we had four different union officials negotiating with Mr. Jaffe, so none of them knew our case.

When the fourth one came, we didn't know if he was working for us or the management — he even left us standing in the rain while he sat in the manager's office discussing the victimisation of Mr. Sarwhu. That incident was the final straw and we came out on a four-week strike.

"He said he was doing us a favour by letting us work there"

But the union didn't do anything to help us: whenever we rung them they would always say they were doing everything in their power, but they never came round to see us. Lorries went through the picket lines delivering and picking up goods, and we couldn't do anything about it because we didn't want to get arrested for violence. We had no support or guidance from the union, so we said to Jaffe after four weeks, either you take back Mr. Sarwhu or we all leave. He wouldn't take him back, so we all left and got jobs in other places.

I went to Boots first, and then British Celanese, but I think they knew me from

being a shop steward at Jaffe's. I wasn't a trouble maker: all I was saying is that we are to be treated the same as white people. After that I worked for Raleigh, which was alright but the job was a bit greasy and they tried to transfer me. Then I got a job with a textile firm, and they started me on £25, saying I would get a rise when the factory got into full production. There are three of us Pakistani operators on the small machines and we get £27 now, but the white workers all work on the big machines and they get

"If the community supports us, we can go through any situation"

£30. I asked to go on those machines but they said I can't because I don't know the job. I told them it only took me two days to learn the small machines and how can I learn the big ones if they won't start me on them? But I can't keep going to the manager because if I go into his office more than twice he's going to give me my cards, saying: 'He keeps barging in my bloody office everyday.' So I think if I start a dispute, people might think 'this coloured boy is always in trouble'. What they don't realise is if you don't make trouble they won't pay you. I think I might start a union or join the same union as the other department where they are making £42 for 40 hours.

My father doesn't struggle, he thinks you just go to the factory and work for them no matter what they pay you. Just ask them once and if they say no, you just stick with the job. I think the younger generation of Asians are prepared to do anything if they're not treated right. But the three-day week has really affected me. My wife is having a baby, I want to buy a house, I want to buy a lot of things which I need. All I do is go to work thinking how I can make some money.

In the Midlands, in Nottingham, wherever we go, we're treated as coloured workers. Big firms aren't too bad, but the small ones treat you like cheap labour. To prevent this, we have to organise together. Wherever there are fifty or more people working, you would have one representative from them so that if there is any discrimination or dispute going on you could help them straight away from all sides because everyone will know what is happening down there. It would be more than a union, it would be supported from the community, for instance, and anyway the unions might not make a strike official. I am going to make an organisation like this — inside the Pakistani League — so that we won't be dividing our people. Our experience has shown us in past strikes that if our community supports us we can go through any situation.



Mike Rodda

Mike Rodda is the Works Convenor at the United Glass factory in New Cross, South London. He came to Britain from Calcutta in 1961.

The day after I turned up in England I went to the Ministry of Labour and they offered me a job as a packer in a zip wholesaling company in Aldgate. It wasn't until I worked there that I realised £9 is nothing for a week. They said "We've got to look out for ourselves, so you go and look for another job and we'll look for another worker." I ended up working at Key Glass Works in New Cross where if people were prepared to do shifts they could earn a bit of money. That was in September 61 and I've been there ever since.

It's now United Glass, subsidiary of Distillers, and it employs 500 workers in bottle manufacture. Blacks work all over on shift work and some are day workers. They work in the shed, the rough jobs that produce the most overtime because their prime interest is money to buy a house or send back home to maintain their parents. A £20 a week job won't do. They don't mind accepting abnormal conditions so long as they get the money.

Foreign workers now want the kind of money that whites get for working the same hours. Some of them work 80 hours for £40. Unfortunately, our pay is determined at national level with representatives on a Joint Council. Management comes from the Head Office level of the major companies and union officers at district level and above. My union is the T&G, but it makes no difference whether the union is USDAW or the GMWU, there's no shop floor representative there. If a meeting takes place at the Charing Cross Hotel between management and the union with plenty of Scotch and all lying about, I wouldn't expect any decision to be made in favour of the workers.

Over the years I have had to accept the job of shop steward and we've had a few strikes and all. The first one we had was over speed ups: it was a productivity deal, the outcome of George Brown's freeze. The agreement was that we'd get another half hour break and we'd get a bit more bonus, but on a reduced manning. They said "You've sold out your recreation allowance." They wanted us to stop smoking, eating and drinking where we were working. After the first strike, we got the smoking and recently we've got back the tea drinking. We've had two more strikes after that, basically on manning. Four of us may work around a table; if they take one man away they say three of you can do the same amount of work that four people used to do. So the employers are trying to get us to work more, and we're be-

ginning to fight to work less.

Before the George Brown freeze, they said "We've got no money, we're running in the red." During the George Brown freeze they said "We'd like to give you the money, but unfortunately there's a freeze on. You take it up to George and see what he says." After things cooled down, they said "We've got no money to give you." At the moment, they're saying "There is a freeze on, Phase Three, and we're sorry there's nothing we can do for you. If you want the money, you must take it up with the Government." So when they've got money, they say there's a freeze on. And when there's a freeze on, they say they are broke. Either way their intention is not to give us more money.

"We are not going to have it. We want a better deal and we are prepared to fight for it."

My experience in the factory is that if there's a strike, it's more supported by the immigrant workers than the white workers, which to me means that they are not prepared to accept a raw deal. They come from the islands, or India or Africa or wherever it is, places where conditions are bad. They expect to find better conditions over here. Which is why they are the first at the picket line, the first at the demonstrations, the first to fight for a better deal. Perhaps we have come away from home, but we are not going to go back to those conditions. Whether we are back home or here, we are not going to have it. We want a better deal and we are prepared to fight for it. Which is why, with many factories, the pickets outside the gate are the coloured workers. Most of them have got a few bob spare, doesn't matter what people say, because they don't spend it on beer. They save their money so they are more able to stand a longer strike than an English person.

Recently, the shop steward at Feltham Way was sacked because he was a militant. So the warehouse stopped, the loading and unloading of trucks stopped and they rang up the workers at the New Cross warehouse and they stopped work loading and unloading. The fork lift drivers and the trucks stopped. They rang up Fletwick. That warehouse also stopped working and it was spreading to the next place at Harlow. That was when management and everyone started running around. By five o'clock it was all settled, the shop steward was to report for work next day and there was no problem.

It so happens that about a week later, the long awaited meetings that had been delayed and not producing anything

produced good fruits. They got £4 per week rise, the lorry drivers. You work that out under Phase Three. How does it work out? Plus 75p as an overnight allowance when they go out. I don't believe they would have got that rise if they weren't militant enough together. By fighting together, it was possible. There is a constant struggle between the management and the workers over bonus and that is how the struggle turns in the factory.

In the present national crisis, we in my firm are still working 24 hours a day, seven days a week as it's a continuous process in the glass container industry. They need the glass because there's a shortage of milk bottles. There is a furnace being built now which means at least another 30 people being employed. I expect that four out of every five employed will be immigrant workers. We'll be lucky if we get the fifth as an Englishman because they come, they have a look and they go away.


When the trouble started with the short-time, I thought it would end up like Germany where the Turkish workers were sent back to their country. I was afraid that the immigrant workers would be eased out with the help of Enoch Powell. But I think it will be a tough time for any government to get rid of the immigrant workers, it doesn't matter what people say. For one thing, my factory would close. I am sure that there are many industries up and down the country that would close because of a shortage of workers. There are the hospital services, the buses, British Rail. They need the men and they don't have

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them. The only people that are keeping it going are the immigrant workers. So the practical aspect is that it's not possible. The economy needs people who know what they're doing and are prepared to do it.

If there were a situation with millions of unemployed, there would be a problem but I cannot foresee that at the moment. That's a bit too much. The government would be destroyed in the process. Anarchism would increase, every political organisation apart from the three main parties would want to pro-



Akbar Khan

Akbar Khan came to Britain in 1966 from Rawalpindi in Pakistan. Now aged 26, he has been involved for three months in the industrial dispute at the West London factory of Perivale Gutterman.

I came to England for a better life and for a new experience. I arrived in London, where I stayed with a friend of mine and then I went to Manchester where I worked for six months in a plastics factory. I didn't have any experience of industrial life in Pakistan, and to be honest, it was pretty hard for me to start with. After Manchester, I moved to Luton and worked on the line at Vauxhalls, and then I went and worked as a press operator at John Dickenson's stationery firm in Watford. Four years ago I came to London and started as a machine operator with Perivale Gutterman.

It's a factory making silk thread and the main work force is Asian from India and Pakistan. Some of the Asians went to work in the parent company in Germany for two years and when they finished, the management said that they would exchange one Indian or Pakistani for ten Italians, so much was their appreciation of their work.

Before 1969 there wasn't any trade union organisation at Perivale Gutterman, and people say that life then wasn't very good. They used to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week for the wage of, say, £30 a week. It was reasonable work, but for a real living wage, you had to work Saturday and Sunday, mornings, afternoons and evenings. It does affect the social life of the Asian blokes who were working there — they couldn't go and see their girlfriends or whatever it is — but to earn a reasonable amount, a living wage, they had to do that.

Since then we have been able to establish a branch of the T&GWU and decent basic rates of pay for our fellow workers. The majority of production employees are Asians and the rest, who are in the warehouse or the office, they don't join the union because they think that it's an Asian trade union: but we are part of the biggest trade union in Britain. They're mainly white people and their basic rate is higher than ours. If we earn more than them, it's only because we work six or seven days a week. I think it's the tactics of the employ-

ment to protect the people. And the left wing groups would rise in arms. Whether it's arms figuratively or literally I cannot say, but I can foresee a fight taking place.

It's like the social security benefits, the benefits we receive. I feel it's just a means of keeping people away from fighting the state. If people did not receive that money, the few pounds they get when they are unemployed, they'd start robbing, they'd start plundering vans and shops so they've got to have something to keep them off the streets really. It's not much, but it's something.

ers who say O.K., if you don't join a union it's better for us and we will give you better money. There are some white ladies, Irish, who joined the company and we made contact with them and asked if they would like to join us: they were approached by the management, who said: 'Don't join them, it's more or less an Asian union.' Two or three of them joined us and stayed with us until they left. One of them said it made her more militant when management said don't join the union; it made her ask why not.

"I think the main problem with employers is that they don't want us to join trades unions"

There was a time when there were wars between India and Pakistan and management tried to split the workers by issuing some sort of leaflet on the shop floor that said: 'We know there's violence going on between India and Pakistan but we don't want any trouble. We know your loyalties lie with one or the other.' But there's never been any trouble of that sort. I mean we have our sympathies for India or Pakistan or Bangladesh or any other country but as a union, as the working class, we have all to be together. There has never been an incident where it would affect our unity or strength.

In 1973, there was a group bonus imposed on us, but it was never understood by us. I'll give you an instance: one week we produced 53,000 kingspools which is the unit there for the calculation of bonus and we had 46p bonus per man. But the next week, we had 53,500, or something like that, and we had 36p bonus. We would argue, look my production's the same, the people in the workforce are the same, nothing has increased, why has the bonus gone down? This was the main stumbling block and I think management never wanted to resolve it because it went in their favour. But the management presented a list of 30 active members and said, accept the group bonus or we will make them redundant. So the shop stewards had no alternative.

We banned the overtime in October

So if there is very high unemployment and the people are stone broke, there'll be a lot of robbery going on, there'll be more thefts and there'll be more bank raids. There'd be utter chaos in this country. It cannot afford it which is why I cannot foresee the possibility of ten million unemployed.

As far as the election is concerned, I say "a plague on both their houses" because it doesn't matter which party is in power, it will still be the shop steward's problem to get more money for the workers.

1973 and as a result all of us trade union members were locked out on 4 December 1973. The T&G has been reasonably good but I would have liked more pressure at higher level. They have branches in the docks and whatever. And we have not received support from nearby factories except one factory which had a collection for us. The main support has come from our own community, the Asian community. We held a concert in Southall and collected about £200 and the people who have been involved in the struggle for the last thirteen weeks have been living with the help of friends and relations. Our own business people have been pretty generous.

I think the main problem with employers is that they don't want us to join trades unions. They know that we have our own liabilities back home, we support our families, we do all sorts of things as they encourage people not to join the union. I dare say it creates problems for the employers. Basically we are a working class people. We know that we are part of British society so we can't live aloof.

Another thing is the national press. Our struggle has been going on for thirteen weeks and we have been going to the editors of national papers, we have written to them, we have phoned them. We have sent them all a brief story of our dispute, but I don't know why they have never bothered to give it in their papers. Some left-wing papers have been round here and they have published it. A few days ago a book was published and in that book it said that the press only gives a bad name to the immigrant community. They would never say that Asian workers are very hard working or that they are this or that or they have done something good or they are a well integrated part of the trade union movement. But if there is some Asian caught on the ferry it will be a front page headline in the newspapers.

We are a law abiding people and we want to do it democratically, constitutionally, legally and now, of course, our case is being heard by the National Industrial Relations Court. But there's this crisis, the three-day-week and that. I should think that if after the elections an unstable government comes in, I don't think the future is very bright. Because if under the three-day week it's difficult to get jobs, and if there are more crises, then I think Asian workers will be the first to be affected. But we are all working class people and we will struggle against it as the working class.



Kewal Lehal

42-year-old Kewal Lehal has lived in England for 20 years. He lives in Leicester and is employed as a skilled worker in the engineering industry. His family in India are peasants, owning their own small farm in the Punjab.

I was a labourer in a foundry. It was a 44-hour week, but I used to work about 60 or 70 hours for £8.7s. I stayed there for two months but it was out of Leicester and I found another job nearer home to save my travelling time.

I had never seen a foundry in my life in India. I didn't know what sort of work I should have to do when I came here, but most of the people I knew were working in that sort of job, so I accepted that way of life to earn money. Furnacemen cast the moulds in metal in the foundry. It's hot, about 1400 degrees Centigrade and dangerous. Sometimes there would be splashes of metal which would burn our clothes and bodies.

I stayed in the second job for ten years. I started as a charger on the furnace, and then became a furnaceman. We worked 60 or 70 hours a week for £14. Only ten or twelve of the workers then were black, but over the years all except the skilled white workers left and were replaced by black workers. The Asian workers then were not given apprenticeships and there was a clear division between skilled white workers and unskilled black workers. But young white workers weren't coming into the foundries. It was too hard and too hot, so they did other jobs that weren't

available to us.

There were always trades unions in the factory and if there was any pushing around by people, they'd stand by us. But they were usually against the blacks when we got better jobs like crane drivers or slingers; they'd tell the foreman that they don't want blackie in the cabin. The Indian Workers' Association supported the unions and told their members to join but sometimes we had to struggle with them. We did in Walkers Crisps a few years ago and told them what was wrong with the union. Some people agreed with us — they're not all racist, but some are.

There was a feeling amongst Asian workers as they got older to go for jobs with smaller hours for the same money. I left in 1964 because I found a job in another foundry as a furnaceman. I was earning as much in 40 hours as I had been in 60.

But I was looking for a better job, and in 1966 I went to Jones and Shipman as a trainee machine operator. For seven years I was semi-skilled and now I am a skilled universal grinder. I am treated on my merits, not on colour but there are now several skilled men there and a charge-hand. Employers always try and get cheap labour by using semi-skilled men as skilled — there is a difference of about £6.00 in their wages — and although I am a member of the union, it's not very progressive. Last year the workers put in for a rise. The shop stewards agreed with the firm for a lesser amount and the men sent them back until they got another pound. But Leicester is very conservative, I've never seen any struggles here. There's only one union, the AEUW: in Bentleys, they're more militant and that firm is the highest paid in Leicester.

Prices have gone up fantastically in the last few months. I mean when we got a 7 per cent rise last December we only got

jobs. In 1969 when I was working at a mill the gaffers troubled me many times. For example they said I couldn't go to the toilet when I wanted but only at dinner time. We all objected and they tried to move us to other departments so a lot of us stopped the machines. After a row with the management they called the police and the story got into the papers. I got fed up so I went back to English Electric. I am more independent there and if anything is wrong I tell the shop steward and he tells the charge-hand. We make the fuse base and terminal base for electric meters, and parts of car panels and washing machines.

My average wage used to be about £25 per week including £12 bonus but now with the three-day-week I can only work 33 hours. And prices keep rising — my curry materials used to be 5p a pound. It's 25p now an increase of 200 per cent. And the wages have not changed, in fact last year there were two operators on the machine and now there is one. The time of production has been cut so that they are saving a lot on each production.

I am a member of the Engineering Union, always have been, but I've never had a case where the Union has had to fight for me, so I don't know if they

£2.50 for skilled men and £2.00 for unskilled. I support the miners and I blame the government for the present crisis. The general election won't solve anything.

I've just returned from seven weeks in India. The inflation there is worse than here and the gap between rich and poor is widening. If you go shopping in the market and you have a hundred rupee note, it doesn't last long. A meal will cost 20 rupees, which is just over a pound. That's a lot more money over there than here. My family work their own land, they don't have to work for anybody and most of the things they use at home they produce for themselves, especially food.

Unless proper care is taken, the crisis is going to get worse. Management, though, is getting nearly as much labour power from me in a three-day-week as in five. I'm working 11½ hours for three days and I would rather work 8. If the crisis gets worse, the foreigners may suffer because the British always say, 'Put Britain first' and things like that. Many black people are working in the foundries, which is a continuous process.

The black people, if they work in foundries where there are non-whites and the foundry is to keep running, they've got to keep the black labour. Even then the whites don't go into the jobs blacks are doing. Some whites, they prefer to go on unemployment benefit instead of having a job because they don't like hard dirty work. The Asians got united over the Immigration Bill and if anything else comes up, we shall do so again.

If black workers do lose their jobs, others will support them for their cause by going on strike and things like that. In Leicester, it's only the IWA, working with the trades union movement and some good shop stewards who are sympathetic to our cause. I think they will fight with us.

would fight for us. Once when we went on strike for two weeks and I went for my money, the secretary said I was too late to get it, but I had signed and paid and all. He said it was because I had been to India, but I had always paid the Union, so I'm not that keen on them now.

I think there is a great crisis now and I blame Heath. He was talking about North Sea Gas and Oil, saying it was going cheap and saying the Government had got to be strong. He does not mean cheap, he means to keep it at the same price but after all, the oil is free, they only pay for moving it, it comes free. That's the Government. I shall vote Labour but I do think socialism and communism is a good thing when it does not oppress the public. I don't know yet if the Labour Party has the solution to the crisis, because I am not that educated. But I do know that there is too much tax on us. If you work for £40 a week, it's twenty which is taken by the Government and £20 left in your pocket. If you go into town with 60p, six is taken off for VAT and so it goes on.

I do support the miners. They want £40 or £45, in my opinion he should get more than £50. If somebody gave me £70 to work underground, I wouldn't go, I like life.



Jhalman Singh Athwal

Jhalman Singh Athwal came to Britain in 1954 when he was 19. He settled in Bradford with friends who had also come from the Punjab. Now he is married and works at English Electric.

In 1954 everyone seemed pleased to see us, but since 1960 and especially Powell's speeches, it has changed. Youths spit on us in the streets, in Woolworths the other week, three youths pushed into me and threatened me.

At work it's not bad because everyone knows me now. My first job was in a brick works but I left after two months for the mills. But the hours were too long for the money and I left for English Electric where I worked as a machine operator. I worked a 40-hour week and preferred the night shift so that I could look after the kid in the day when my wife worked. In 1966 I left for a visit to India and when I returned, I tried other

'There is slowly arising not only a curiously strong brotherhood of Negro blood throughout the world, but the common cause of the darker races against the intolerable assumption and insults of Europeans has already found expression. Most men in this world are coloured. A belief in humanity means a belief in coloured men. The future world will, in all reasonable possibility, be what coloured men make it.' That international social movement, identified by W.E.B. DuBois (in *The Negro*, 1915) found organisational expression in five successive Pan African Congresses. What distinguishes the 6th Pan African Congress from the rest is the fact that it seeks to give expression and direction to a vibrant and active mass movement of millions of Africans all over the world who are today organised in a variety of organisations with equally varied hopes and aspirations. Whereas the first five congresses were held outside Africa, the 6th PAC is scheduled to take place in *Tanzania, East Africa (3-13 June 1974)*. This fact is directly related to the massive intervention of African workers and peasants in the successful struggles for political independence in the 1950s, and in particular, to the socialist orientation of the Tanzanian revolution.

In this *Race Today* supplement we outline the general history of the Pan African Movement and the tasks facing the 6th PAC, with contributions from past and present activists in that movement. We dedicate the supplement to George Padmore, a Trinidadian, whose dedication to the cause of Pan Africanism and the liberation of black peoples makes him one of the great revolutionaries of the century.

In the following extracts W.E.B. DuBois charts the history of the first four Pan African Congresses from 1919-27.

First Pan-African Congress, 1919, Paris

This Congress represented Africa partially. Of the 57 delegates from 15 countries, 9 were African countries with 12 delegates. The others came from the United States, which sent 16, and the West Indies, with 21. Most of these delegates happened to be residing in France at the time. America and all the colonial powers refused to issue special visas.

The New York Evening Globe (22 February 1919) described the Congress as 'the first assembly of the kind in history, and as for its object the drafting of an appeal to the Peace Conference to give the Negro race of Africa a chance to develop unhindered by other races'.

The resolutions of the Congress said in part:

(a) That the Allied and Associated Powers establish a code of law for the international protection of the natives of Africa, similar to the proposed international code for labour.

(b) That the League of Nations establish a permanent Bureau charged with the special duty of over-seeing the application of these laws to the political, social, and economic welfare of the natives.

(c) The Negroes of the world demand that hereafter the natives of Africa and the peoples of African descent be governed according to the following principles:

1. *The land* and its natural resources shall be held in trust for the natives and at all times they shall have effective ownership of as much land as they can profitably develop.

2. *Capital*. The investment of capital and granting of concessions shall be so regulated as to prevent the exploitation of the natives and the exhaustion of the natural wealth of the country. Concessions shall always be limited in time and subject to State control. The growing social needs of the natives must be regarded and the profits taxed for social and material benefit of the natives.

3. *Labour*. Slavery and corporal punishment shall be abolished and forced labour except in punishment for crime; and the general conditions of labour shall be prescribed and regulated by the State.

4. *Education*. It shall be the right of every native child to learn to read and

write his own language, and the language of the trustee nation, at public expense, and to be given technical instruction in some branch of industry. The State shall also educate as large a number of natives as possible in higher technical instruction in some branch of industry. The State shall also educate as large a number of natives as possible in higher technical and cultural training and maintain a corps of native teachers . . .

5. *The State*. The natives of Africa must have the right to participate in the Government as far as their development permits in conformity with the principle that the Government exists for the natives, and not the natives for the Government. They shall at once be allowed to participate in local and tribal government according to ancient usage, and this participation shall gradually extend, as education and experience proceeds to the higher offices of State, to the end that, in time, Africa be ruled by consent of the Africans . . . Whenever it is proven that African natives are not receiving just treatment at the hands of any State or that any State deliberately excludes its civilised citizens or subjects of Negro descent from its body politic and cultural, it shall be the duty of the League of Nations to bring the matter to the civilized World.

Second Pan-African Congress, 1921, London and Paris

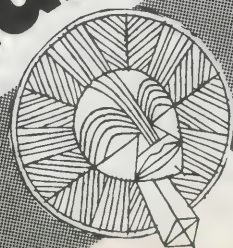
The idea of Pan-Africa having been thus established, a more authentic Pan-African Congress and movement was built up. Of the 113 delegates to the 2nd Congress, 41 were from Africa, 35 from the United States, 24 represented Negroes living in Europe, and 7 were from the West Indies. Thus the African element showed growth.

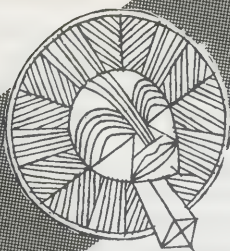
The following is part of the resolutions adopted:

To the World: The absolute equality of races, physical, political, and social, is the founding stone of world and human advancement . . .

The beginning of wisdom in inter-racial contact is the establishment of political institutions among suppressed peoples. The habit of democracy must be made to encircle the earth. Despite the attempts to prove that its practice is the secret and divine gift of the few, no habit is more natural or more widely spread among primitive people, or more easily capable of development among masses. Local self-government with a minimum of help and oversight can be established tomorrow.

THE SIXTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS





row in Asia, in Africa, America, and the Isles of the sea. It will in many instances need general control and guidance, but it will fail only when that guidance seeks ignorantly and consciously its own selfish ends and not the people's liberty and good

What, then, do those demand who see these evils of the colour line and racial discrimination, and who believe in the divine right of suppressed and backward people to learn and aspire and be free? The Negro race through their thinking intelligentsia demand:

1. *The recognition* of civilized men as civilized despite their race or colour.
2. *Local self-government* for backward groups, deliberately rising as experience and knowledge grow to complete self-government under the limitation of a self-governed world.
3. *Education* in self-knowledge, in scientific truth, and in industrial technique, undivorced from the art of beauty.
4. *Freedom* in their own religion and social customs and with the right to be different and non-conformist.
5. *Co-operation* with the rest of the world in government, industry, and art on the bases of Justice, Freedom, and Peace.
6. *The return* to Negroes of their land and its natural fruits, and defence against the unrestrained greed of invested capital.
7. *The establishment* under the League

of Nations of an international institution for study of the Negro problems.

8. *The establishment* of an international section of the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations, charged with the protection of native labour

Third Pan-African Congress, 1923, London and Lisbon

The London session was small. The meeting of the Congress in Lisbon was more successful. Eleven countries were represented there, especially Portuguese Africa. The Liga Africana, the federation of all indigenous associations scattered throughout the five provinces of Portuguese Africa and representing several million individuals, was in charge.

The following demands were made for Africans:

2. *The right* of access to the land and its resources.
 3. *Trial* by juries of their peers under established forms of law.
 4. *Free elementary* education for all; broad training in modern industrial technique; and higher training of selected talent.
 5. *The development* of Africa for the benefit of Africans, and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
 6. *The Abolition* of the slave trade and of the liquor traffic.
 7. *World disarmament* and the abolition of war; but failing this, and as long as white folk bear arms against black folk, the right of blacks to bear arms in their own defence.
 8. *The organisation* of commerce and industry so as to make the main objects of capital and labour the welfare of the many rather than the enriching of the few
- In fine, we ask in all the world, that black folk be treated as men. We can see no other road to peace and progress.

What more paradoxical figure today fronts the world that the official head of a great South African state striving blindly to build peace and good will in Europe by standing on the necks and hearts of millions of black Africans?

So far, the Pan-African idea was still American rather than African, but it was growing, and it expressed a real demand for examination of the African situation and a plan of treatment from the native African point of view. With the object of moving the centre of this agitation nearer other African centres of population, a fourth Pan-African Congress in the West Indies was planned for 1925. But it ran into difficulties - George Padmore suspected that the 'colonial powers spiked' it.

Fourth Pan-African Congress, 1927, New York

Thirteen countries were represented, but direct African participation lagged. There were 208 delegates from 22 American states and 10 foreign countries. Africa was sparsely represented by representatives from the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria.

The resolution stressed six points: Negroes everywhere need:

1. *A voice* in their own government.
2. *Native rights* to the land and its natural resources.
3. *Modern education* for all children.
4. *The development* of Africa for the Africans and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
5. *The reorganisation* of commerce and industry so as to make the main object of capital and labour the welfare of the many rather than the enriching of the few.
6. *The treatment* of civilized men as civilized despite difference of birth, race, or colour.

THE 5th PAC

The delegates of the 5th Pan African Congress believe in the right of all peoples to govern themselves. We affirm the right of all colonial peoples to control their own destiny. All colonies must be free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic. The peoples of the colonies must have the right to elect their own governments, without restrictions from foreign powers. We say to the peoples of the colonies that they must fight for these ends by all the means at their disposal.

The object of imperialist powers is to exploit. By granting the right to colonial peoples to govern themselves that object is defeated. Therefore, the struggle for political power by colonial and subject peoples is the first step towards, and the necessary prerequisite to, complete social, economic and political emancipation.

The 5th Pan African Congress therefore

calls on the workers and farmers of the colonies to organise effectively. Colonial workers must be in the front of the battle against imperialism. Your weapons — the strike and the boycott — are invincible.

We also call upon the intellectuals and professional classes of the colonies to awaken to their responsibilities. By fighting for trade union rights, the right to form cooperatives, freedom of the press, assembly, demonstration and strike, freedom to print and read the literature which is necessary for the education of the masses, you will be using the only means by which your liberties will be won and maintained. Today there is only one road to effective action — the organisation of the masses. And in that organisation the educated colonials must join.

Colonial and Subject Peoples of the World — Unite!

Peter Abrahams on the 5th PAC.

The 5th Pan African Congress was held in the Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester, from 13-21 October, 1945. Some two hundred delegates holding mandates from political, social and trade union organisations, attended. Dr. W.B. Burghardt Du-Bois, the eminent Negro scholar and writer, was unanimously elected International President of the Congress. This Congress, therefore, was the most representative yet assembled by African and peoples of African descent to plan and work for the liquidation of imperialism.

On the occasion of the British Labour's victory over Toryism, the Pan African Federation issued an Open Letter to Prime Minister Attlee, in which it declared that 'to condemn the Imperialism of Germany, Japan and Italy while condoning that of Britain would be more than



Fifth Pan African Congress in Manchester

dishonest. It would be a betrayal of the sacrifice and sufferings and the toil and sweat of the common people of Britain. All Imperialism is evil.' Believing this, the Federation therefore demanded 'for the Colonial peoples the immediate right to self-determination' as an effective step in the process of banishing wars.

Once again at the 5th PAC the banner against imperialism, against man's political and territorial domination by other men was raised high by representatives of the colonial and coloured masses. By its behaviour, the European left, with rare exceptions, has forfeited the right to leadership of the struggle against imperialism. The delegates to the 5th PAC brought the spirit and purpose of a new leadership.

Dr. W.E.B. DuBois can, justly, be called the 'Father' of the Pan African movement, motivated by the inspiration of contacts with Negroes of different origins and nationalities. 'My plans', he writes in *Dusk of Dawn*, 'had in them nothing spectacular nor revolutionary. If in decades or a century they resulted in such world organisation of black men as would oppose a united front to European aggression, that certainly would not have been beyond my dream . . . Out of this there might come, not race war and opposition, but broader cooperation with the white rulers of the world, and a chance for peaceful and accelerated development of black folk.'

The more immediate inspiration of the 5th Congress arose after the World Trade Union Conference in London in February, 1945. The Colonial delegates to the World Trade Union Conference were invited to Manchester, where the British section of the Pan African Federation was just in the process of coming to life. An informal meeting was held, at which representatives from the various colonies exchanged information and discussed their problems. As a result of these discussions, George Padmore, Chairman of the International African Service Bureau, threw out the idea of convening another Pan African Congress. It was warmly

received and endorsed by Dr. Peter Milliard, President of the British Section of the Pan African Federation, and its Treasurer, T.R. Makonnen; Jomo Kenyatta, Secretary of the Kikuyu Central Association of Kenya, I.T.A. Wallace-Johnson, General Secretary of the West African (Sierra Leone) Youth League, and representatives of Negro organisations in Great Britain. The overseas delegates took it to their respective countries and discussed it with their peoples. The response was immediate, and the business of organising the 5th Congress quickly proceeded.

Colonial Unity

Earlier in 1945, a Subject Peoples' Conference was held in London. It was not as representative as the 5th Pan African Congress, but Indians, Burmese, Ceylonese, Malaysians, Africans, West Indians, and others, took part. Representation was mainly from colonial organisations in Britain.

This Subject Peoples' Conference was largely an exploratory gathering aimed at the setting-up of some permanent organisation for the co-ordination of the colonial struggle. Its success and the warm response to the World Pan African Congress and officially organised Asian Relations Conference in India, bring international colonial and coloured unity in sight.

Our own contribution to this unity has expanded, since the 5th Pan African Congress, into the closer establishment of fraternal contacts between the African and Asiatic liberation movements, out of which it is hoped that in due course a Colonial and Coloured Peoples' Freedom Front will develop.

We see, then, that the colonial struggle has entered a new phase, a militant phase. It is important that the left in Britain and other imperialist countries should recognise this and aid it. But while militant, this phase is not chauvinistic, narrow or racial. It is positive and constructive. This is evident in the declarations made at the 5th Pan African Congress and the resolutions adopted by it, which

are recorded in this report. It is a synthesis of experience and deliberate opinion that clearly reflects the political, economic and social aspirations of Africans and peoples of African descent. Indeed it constitutes the programme upon which the struggle for national liberation and social emancipation of the colonial and coloured peoples will be based, a struggle which must be fought and won before we can establish the century of the common man.

FORWARD TO THE SOCIALIST UNITED STATES OF AFRICA! LONG LIVE PAN-AFRICANISM!

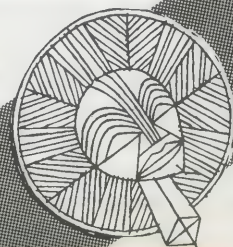
Kwame Nkrumah on the 5th PAC.

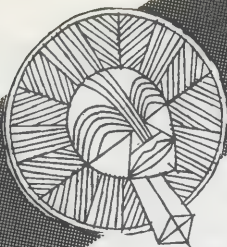
The 5th Pan African Congress which took place in Manchester, England, in October 1945, set as its goal the liquidation of colonialism and imperialism from the Continent of Africa. But from Manchester to the Addis Ababa Conference is a far cry, and Africa has seen great changes in the historic events that have taken place in the life and destiny of her people between those two significant landmarks. We can say with confidence today that our vision has been richly rewarded, for African Unity is no longer a dream.

Previous Pan African Congresses had laid emphasis on agitation for amelioration of colonial conditions. They called for reforms and pressed for nothing more than a voice by colonial people in their own government. The 5th Pan African Congress struck a new note. Those of us from Africa, more numerous at this assembly than on the earlier ones, had decided that reformism offered at best a delaying strategy. At worst, it could be met just as sharply as outright demand for complete and absolute independence.

The most devastating war in history had just ended, and we felt that it should bring to us of the colonial world, whose labours and resources, whose human and natural wealth had contributed as much as anything else to the defeat of the fascist menace, the same freedom that the conquered countries of Europe were assuming. Freedom, we considered, like peace, was indivisible. Hence we shot into the limbo the gradualist aspirations of our African middle classes and intellectuals and expressed the solid, down-to-earth will of our workers, trade unionists, farmers and peasants who were decisively represented at Manchester, for independence.

We made our resolutions and set out our programmes. It is no exaggeration to





say that we went from Manchester knowing definitely where we were going. We were primed for action in the tearing struggle we clearly saw ahead. We had resolved to recover a continent in which only two small corners were free from imperialist occupation. Thirteen years later, in 1958, Heads of eight Independent African States met in Accra. Another five years enlarged our number to thirty-two, and we gathered at Addis Ababa to discuss our unity and to confer with our brothers, the Freedom Fighters from the remainder of the continent, on how to carry on the fight to extend independence to the last corners of Africa.

At Manchester, we knew that we were speaking for all Africa, expressing the deepest desires and determination of a mighty continent to be wholly free. The desire was very emphatically reiterated in Addis Ababa where the Heads of State

and Government of 32 Independent African States representing 250 million Africans, witnessed probably the most important turning point in the political and economic history of any continent.

A good part of that task still remains, and our determination to complete it is stauncher than ever. We are reinforced by the strength of the independence that has been won; and our bond of unity, laid at Addis Ababa, will give added force to our efforts to overcome the formidable barrage that is flanked against us.

Although imperialism is well served by its twin handmaidens of colonialism and neo-colonialism, we will not allow it to remain in Africa to plunder our rightful heritage. The pioneers of the African Liberation Movement who, as a small group of unknown men, met in Manchester in 1945 to challenge and overthrow imperialism, as yet arrogant and powerful, cannot be defeated now, when the people of Africa are awake and vigilant, prepared for any sacrifices. Imperialism's wall has been well breached. Soon all of Africa shall be free. Free in the fullest sense of a continent holding itself politically sovereign, ordering its economic destiny, and achieving its own cultural and spiritual personality.

Since the Manchester Conference we have experienced much and learned

much. But our aims to liberate and unite the whole of the African continent are undiminished.

Kwame Nkrumah



THE VOICE OF COLOURED LABOUR

George Padmore earned himself the title, 'The Father of Pan-Africanism'. Drawing inspiration from the presence of colonial delegates to the World Trade Union Conference in London, February 1945, he invited these delegates to an informal meeting in Manchester at which he 'threw out the idea of convening another Pan African Congress'.

Below Padmore records the contribution of coloured labour at the World Trade Union Conference to the international working class movement of the day.

The wide and representative character of the colonial delegation to the World Trade Union Conference in February 1945 was significant and encouraging. It was significant for the fact that for the first time in the history of international labour, coloured colonial workers — the most oppressed and exploited section of the world proletariat — were given the opportunity of voicing their grievances and of expressing their hopes and aspirations through their trusted leaders. It was encouraging because in discussing the question of a new international trade union organisation, the white working class trade union movements of Europe and America, which have hitherto ignored the coloured workers, are apparently beginning to recognise that 'Labour in the white skin cannot emancipate itself while Labour in the black skin is enslaved'. This awareness was manifested in drawing the long-neglected and forgotten millions of colonial workers into the world fraternity of labour.

Call for International Federation

In this sense the World Trade Union Conference achieved a degree of solidarity which should go a long way towards laying the foundations of the new inter-

national federation whose formation has been endorsed.

Colonial delegates came from Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia in West Africa; from Jamaica in the West Indies; British Guiana in South America; from Palestine, Cyprus, and elsewhere. It is noteworthy that the Northern Rhodesian Mineworkers' Union was represented by a white man, for the Colour Bar in that colony excludes African miners from entering the Union. While most of the colonial unions represented by the coloured delegates are young, they have nevertheless been able to build up substantial memberships since 1940, when trade unionism was recognised in principle for the first time by the British colonial administrations.

The Nigerian Trade Union Congress, which came into being only three years ago, now boasts a membership of 500,000 and 56 affiliated unions, covering transport, mining, dock-labour, seamen, public works, government employees, etc. On the other hand, the British Guiana Trade Union Council, with a membership of 10,000, is one of the oldest working-class organisations in the colonial empire. It recently

celebrated its 25th anniversary and was represented at the Conference by its president, Mr. Hubert Critchlow, who founded and led the movement through its quarter of a century of existence. Mr. Critchlow is the representative of the Negro, Indian and other coloured workers of British Guiana on the Governor's Executive Council.

Although most of the coloured delegates have served long terms of imprisonment for their working class and trade union activities, their speeches to the Conference did not reflect any of the personal bitterness and rancour that one might have expected from individuals who have been the victims of relentless persecution. For example, T.A. Bankole, President of the Nigerian Trade Union Congress, addressing the closing session of the Conference on the subject of the new international federation, stressed the need for an all-embracing organisation. 'At this juncture in world affairs, when labour has adorned its history with glorious achievements in the struggle to overthrow Fascism and to establish a

lasting peace, the workers of the world cannot but come together in order to be in a position to contribute collectively to the establishment and maintenance of that peace,' Mr. Bankole declared, and went on to say that he thought this was 'why the formation of an international trade union organisation is a prime necessity'. Such an organisation, he emphasised, 'must be founded on the principle of equal treatment for all affiliated bodies and their representatives, regardless of the countries from which they derive, and must be nurtured in an atmosphere of mutual regard, discipline and candour. It must keep an open door for all approved labour organisations functioning in all lands' — allied, neutral and ex-enemy.

There was nothing of narrow nationalism, racial or chauvinistic, in the speeches of these black men. Every one of them reflected a high level of class solidarity and socialist conviction.

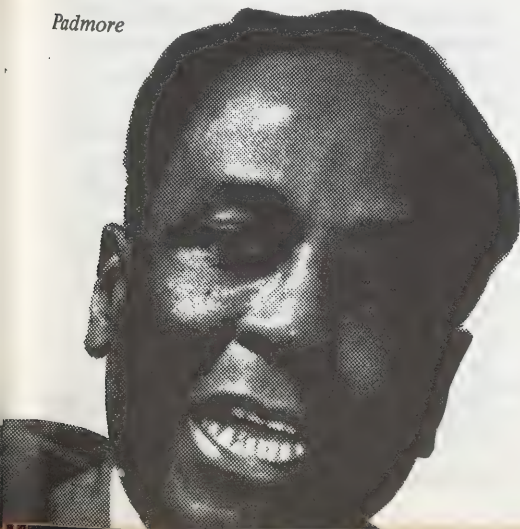
Charter of Labour

The specific claims of the colonial working classes were voiced by Wallace Johnson, President of the Sierra Leone Trade Union Congress, who a few weeks before his arrival in London had been released by the British Government after five and a half years' imprisonment and exile to Sherbro Island, off the coast of West Africa. Mr. Johnson called upon the Conference not merely to confine its condemnation to fascism, which is not the only enemy of the working class. 'Imperialism', he asserted, 'is for the colonial workers as great a menace as Fascism is to the workers of the metropolitan countries of Europe.' He therefore appealed to the Conference to endorse and support the following immediate demands, unanimously approved and adopted by all the colonial delegates as a Charter of Labour for the colonies:

1. The abolition of the Colour Bar and all racial discrimination in public and private employment.

2. The abolition of forced labour, child labour, and all forms of slavery, open or disguised, abolition of flogging and other forms of punishment for breach of labour contract as well as penal sanctions for breach of labour contract.

Padmore



3. Abolition of all pass law legislation and the establishment of the right of free assembly, free speech, free press, free movement.

4. Equal pay for equal work, irrespective of race, colour, creed, or sex.

5. Abolition of racial restrictions against the admittance of African and other coloured workers into existing white trade unions (South Africa, Rhodesia, etc.). Wherever such restrictions continue to operate, Africans and other coloured workers should have the right to create separate and free trade unions.

6. Trade union and social legislation existing in the colonies should be brought into line with that existing in the metropolis, or conversely, the same trade union and social legislative principles operating in the metropolitan countries should be made applicable to the colonial territories.

Concluding his speech, Wallace Johnson reminded the Conference that 'Justice, like Peace, is indivisible, and the world today cannot remain half free and half slave'.

Self-determination

In an eloquent speech, Ken Hill, representing the Jamaica Trade Union Council, the most progressive section of the organised workers' movement of that Caribbean colony, called for the extension of the principle of self-determination enunciated under Article 3 of the Atlantic Charter to the colonial peoples. There is no doubt that he brought to the deliberations of the Conference a comprehensive vision and international outlook as refreshing as it is rare at such gatherings. Hill suggested that 'it would be unthinkable if this Conference through its committees did not put forward declarations expressing progressive views on the colonial question. 'To do less', he asserted, 'would be to leave the world to be betrayed into another war within the present generation.'

While recognising that the indomitable purpose of the free and democratic trade union movements of the world is to crush fascism wherever it raises its ugly head, Ken Hill declared: 'But we must go further. We must take care that in our preoccupation with this historic task, we do not fail to take steps and use the influence of the international working-class movement to discontinue the system of imperialism and capitalist domination, whatever shape or form they take.'

The Growth of the Union Movement

Inspired by what may promise to be the rebirth of the united labour movement, these black men from the far-flung parts of the British Empire have returned to their respective countries and are continuing with undiminished zeal the struggle not only for national liberation from the fetters of imperialism, but also for the economic and social emancipation of the

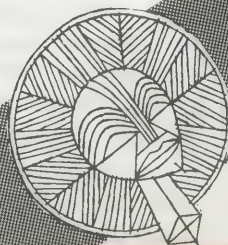
down-trodden workers and peasants for whom they speak.

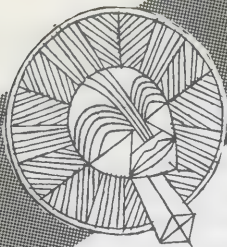
Imbued by the spirit of unity, the West African delegates have already issued a statement declaring that the time is fully ripe for the formation of a West African trade union federation, and that this should be an immediate objective aiming at co-ordinating the advance of the territory of West Africa as a whole. As a preliminary step they propose the formation of a West African trade union advisory council, on the approval of the respective West African trade union congresses, or their equivalents, which shall consist of the present heads of congresses or their accredited representatives, and which shall meet at an early date in one of the British West African colonies for the purpose of formulating the basis of the proposed federation.

Without a doubt the labour movement in the colonies is on the move and conscious of its aims. A similar move is taking place in the West Indies, where efforts are being made to bring about an All-West Indian Federation of the trade union organisations in the various islands, as part of the general trend towards West Indian political, economic and social federation.

Labour Leaders Intimidated

But while these trade union organisations are officially tolerated, they are meeting with immense opposition from the European employers, especially the mining and agricultural monopolists. Workers who identify themselves with trade unionism are considered Bolsheviks and their leaders are hunted from pillar to post. Not only is it the employers who engage in intimidating the workers, the colonial administrations themselves are often guilty. For example, in Nigeria, Michael A.O. Imoudu, President of the Railway Workers' Union, because of his trade union activities, was arrested and deported from Lagos for a number of years by the Governor of Nigeria. Mr. Wallace Johnson, Secretary of the Sierra Leone Trades Union Congress, has suffered similar exile. In the West Indies, almost all of the prominent labour leaders have at some time or another been imprisoned, Alexander Bustamante and Ken Hill in Jamaica, Uriah Butler in Trinidad, Clem Payne in Barbados, and many others. Unlike labour leaders in Britain, champions of the working class in the colonies are not regarded by the





authorities as respectable citizens. They are always subject to molestation.

In the same way newspapers which are not necessarily trade union organs, but which support the struggles of the workers, are often suppressed. *The Nigeria Worker*, the organ of the territory's Trades Union Congress, has suffered a long period of suppression. And during the general strike which broke out on 21 June 1945, and is still in progress at this writing (20 July 1945), two of the most progressive African newspapers, *The West African Pilot* and *Daily Comet*, have been suppressed. Colonial officials hostile to trade unionism invoke defence regulations to muzzle the press. Under these regulations any editor in Nigeria can be fined £300 or sentenced to three years' imprisonment or both without trial. All kinds of charges, from sedition to conspiracy, are levelled against militant colonial labour leaders who make a courageous stand in demanding elementary rights for the working class. The

most usual charge is one of incitement to disaffection, for under colonial conditions of a plural society, it is very easy to make out grounds for such a charge. In these territories, where the exploiters of labour are white and the exploited black, a demand for higher wages or better conditions of service is immediately interpreted as racial incitement - the black workers against the white capitalists.

The barriers to the building up of trade unions are multiplied manifold in territories like South Africa, the Rhodesias, Kenya, and other East African colonies, where official restrictions against assembly and freedom of movement and association of the indigenous peoples operate. Nevertheless considerable achievements can be registered, despite all the handicaps.

It is estimated that throughout the whole colonial Empire there are about 350 registered trade unions, varying in their membership from a few hundred to several thousand. For example, in Nigeria alone, there are over 100 trade unions affiliated to the Nigeria Trades Union Congress. The colonies in which the trade union movement is most backward are precisely those where restrictions upon the right of public assembly and movement are most rigidly imposed. Pass laws, vagrancy regulations, penal sanctions, riotous assembly acts, all conspire to make it difficult, if not impossi-

ble, for workers to exercise their democratic right of association and collective bargaining. It is therefore not surprising that up to 1945 there were not more than two registered unions in Kenya, one in Uganda and two in Tanganyika.

British Workers Must Act

In view of all the difficulties it is the duty of the more advanced trade unions, especially those in Britain, to render every fraternal support to these coloured workers, who are today passing through their Tolpuddle period. Moreover, the British working class have the great responsibility of making every effort to retrieve their country's honour, for the ruling class of their nation have done everything by their ruthless exploitation and oppression of the defenceless coloured workers of the colonial Empire to engender hostility between the subject peoples and those of the metropolis. This hostility can only be overcome if the British workers demonstrate in deeds and not merely in words their sympathy with the colonial workers. It is in their enlightened self-interest to do so, for, as one of the speakers reminded the Conference: 'Labour in the white skin cannot free itself while Labour in the black skin is enslaved.' Once this truism is accepted, then the desired bond between workers everywhere, regardless of colour or creed, will find expression in unity of action and purpose.

THE ROLE OF THE 6th PAC

Interview with veteran Pan Africanist C.L.R. James and Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, on the role of the 6th Pan African Congress on the future development of African peoples.

Q: Mr. James, to give some historical perspective to our discussion, can you tell us briefly about the issues facing the African world at the Fifth Pan African Congress?

JAMES: At the time of the 5th PAC, the issue for the African world was the fact that we were not only subordinate in ideas and in actual life to Western society, to those who led the world at the time, but we didn't have much prospects of emerging from that subordinate position. That was the issue. Marcus Garvey had begun. Marcus Garvey had said: 'We are not going to continue to be the way we are. At one time we were people who mattered in the world and we shall be again.' But Marcus Garvey died and by 1945, the World War had come, although the world revolution had not come. But there were these issues among the African people - we were waiting to go somewhere but there was no policy or programme that was clearly set before us. It is important to know where you are going and to be aware of what you have left behind. So that is where we were in 1945.

Q: Tanzania has been chosen as the location of the 6th Pan African Congress because it has been viewed throughout

the African world as one of the most important working models of self-reliance. Could you explain to us what you see as the objectives of Tanzania in this regard, and what have been some of the successes and failures of this policy?

NYERERE: Perhaps I should answer that question by saying, first, that we probably have a reputation which is bigger than ourselves. We have this reputation because we have articulated a policy which we have explained to our own people, and some people outside of Tanzania have read it, and I think, understood it. And as a result of this articulation of *ujamaa* we have this reputation.

But when it comes to trying to execute these policies into living, our achievement is less than our reputation. Let me say that what we are really saying is two things. We are saying we have got to develop. But we are saying, for us, development means liberation. It can't be anything else. It can't be development in the sense of building a house like this one (his residence at Magzani), or building a tarmac road, or even building a school, or building pyramids.

Development for us is liberation. It's liberating this person who, until now,

has been suffering under colonialism, and in the past under slavery, and under all kinds of superstitious beliefs, and so forth. This person must be liberated. This, to us, is the meaning of development.

Now if, therefore, development is liberation, this person must develop himself. He can't be liberated by another, he has got to liberate himself. It's self-liberation, hence self-reliance. Hence the real meaning of self-reliance. If it is not self-reliant development, it won't be liberation. This is the first thing.

The second thing is, for us, if it means development, developing this person and liberating him from all of those things which made him unfree, one of those things which made him unfree, or a consequence of unfreedom, is inequality.

The consequence of unfreedom is inequality. Therefore, we've got to talk in terms of equality as part of that development. And for us we can't talk in terms of equality if we include exploitation in this liberation; hence, again, *ujamaa*. So we have to talk in terms of *ujamaa* and self-reliance as the same thing, two twins which liberate our people people.

Q: If I understand you correctly, what

you're saying is that this process of liberation has begun, but it will take a long time. I know that the vision that many people in Tanzania have is not just for Tanzania, but for Africa as a whole, for African people around the world. Can you give us some idea of your vision about Africa's future?

NYERERE: Naturally, this is of course a belief. First of all, we say that every African country must determine its own path, and no one African country can say: 'This is the way.' And we mean this.

But we also are believers in the liberation of the African person. We find it difficult to say liberation is alright for Tanzania, but it is not alright for the rest of Africa. So in that respect we find that we are wishing the same thing for the whole of Africa, because the African we are talking about is African, and we are great believers here in Africa as Africa. Because, Africa is much more real; the African is real.

I am a Tanzanian, it's true, but this thing Tanzania is how many years old? Seven years old. So this thing you call Tanzania is a child, and is in a sense a product of colonialism.

And so the real historic development is the development of the African world. So the vision we have is a vision of an Africa liberating itself — liberating itself in the sense that we are talking about.

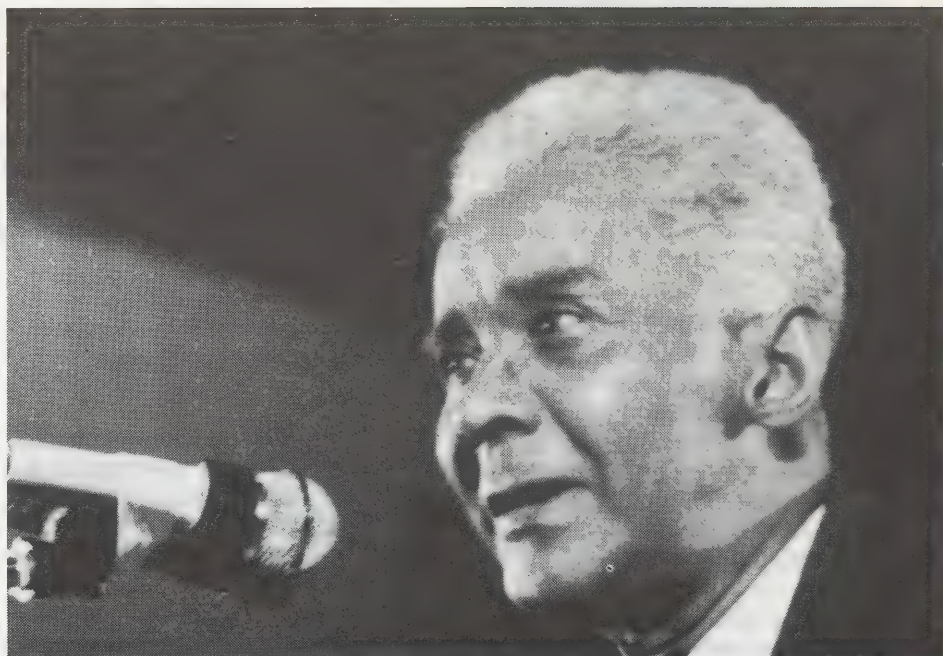
Historically, we are saying that as a result of this partition of Africa, this division of Africans, for us in Tanzania, this is the area which history has given to us. This is our historic mission here, within Tanzania. But we hope that what we are doing will be a contribution to this liberation of Africa, because we can't see development in Africa in any other sense, except as the instrument of liberating Africa.

And one visualises a free Africa. To me a free Africa is an Africa of liberated people, liberated persons, a wealthy — perhaps I shouldn't call it a wealthy Africa, it is an Africa without poverty.

Q: In the intervening period between 1945 and the present, how has that situation been transformed?

NYERERE: I should myself say that a Pan African Congress of present Africa would be different from a past Congress. A past Congress was talking in terms of independence from colonist rule, and whenever our leaders met in the past, they discussed the freedom of the African people from colonial rule. In a sense, they have achieved that.

JAMES: The major issue is to get out of our subordinate position, even if that position is presently covered over with a blanket that says that you are free. That is the real major issue for the blacks — to emerge completely and be an absolutely free and independent people. But since



Veteran Pan-Africanist C.L.R. James

the end of World War II and into the present time, the attitude of blacks towards Western civilisation has changed immensely. In addition, many positions have been won. For instance, in Africa and in the Caribbean, political independence has been won. It is now being discovered — a fact which is a great political education — that political independence is not what it is said to be, it is not what it is made out to be. Nor has it given what it can give. But the attitude of African people to Western civilisation, from end to end of the modern world, is *absolutely different* from what it was in 1945 when the 5th Pan African Congress took place.

Q: How would you assess the significance of the upcoming 6th Pan African Congress?

JAMES: The 6th Pan African Congress is going to help do what the people are wanting to be done for them. Now I have to be quite precise in this tremendous matter when so many millions are concerned. I do not think the people as a whole who were around the 5th PAC were very much concerned about what the 5th PAC or any Congress was going to do. But today the African people in the world are very anxious, very concerned and have all sorts of organisations, all of which aim at dragging black people from their subordinated places.

This is the difference between the 5th and the 6th Congress. In the 5th, we were a vanguard, we were a body of

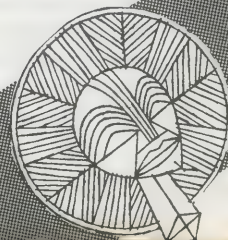
people who had some advanced ideas, and very good ideas they were, but a great mass of the population following us, that we did not have. Today, not only the 6th PAC, but all sorts of groups in every part of the world, in many parts of Africa, in the United States, right through the Caribbean, are taking part and having in mind where are we going and what we are going to do. Courtland Cox (the General Secretary of the 6th PAC) and I were present at the Commonwealth Conference, and we paid close attention to the Conference because we were concerned with the African people who were there. What struck me after a few days there, is the dominant position that General Gowon held among people who attended the Conference. What the other people were doing, what Prime Minister Trudeau was doing (I suppose he was there because it was held in Canada), what Heath, etc., were doing there was paid little attention to. But there was no question that one of the men who emerged as world figure at the present time and a man to look at in the future was General Gowon of Nigeria.

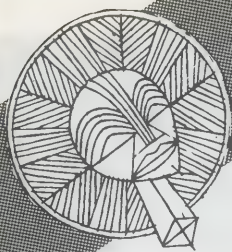
NYERERE: A congress of African peoples now should say: 'Where do we go from here?' Is it enough for Africans to say we have these pieces which we have inherited from colonialism, and these pieces are now independent? Is it enough, is this an end? Shouldn't this be an instrument of truer liberation?

Are these units speaking really of Africa? Are these units worth preserving?

'Every time a conference takes place, it marks a stage in the political development or interest of the people taking part in it and those to whom appeal is being made for support.'

— James





Should Africans be working for Africa or working for Tanzania? Is the African really free? Are we free because we are no longer under colonial rule?

A congress like this should be saying: 'We have achieved the first objective. We have not completely achieved it; Southern Africa is not independent. But we have achieved the first objective. Where do we go from here?'

In my opinion, what we have achieved — although it is important — it is still very little.

We cannot. The African, the black people on this planet, will not play their real role, will not contribute to the march of human history until they are liberated, which we are not.

I'm not liberated. I can't be liberated simply because I am the head of state of an independent African state. This is not possible. I can only be liberated when the peoples of Africa, when African people, are liberated. And they are not liberated now.

We have got to work for this liberation of the person. This means the ending of exploitation, the ending of all kinds of inequalities. We've got to work for this.

But I feel also we've got to work for unity. We must work for unity. In the past we simply said we wanted to free Africa. Now we've got to work for unity. We can't preserve these inheritances of colonialism.

We've got to use them, and achieve a real strength that can enable us to take a real position in the world.

Q: What do you see specifically as the immediate objectives of that unity, and long-range objectives in terms of creating the kind of unity we need?

NYERERE: I think an understanding. First of all I would work for an understanding. First of all I would work for an awareness.

Are the African people, and their leaders, aware of their historic mission? Do they see the need to work for a better position in the world for the black man? Do they see that?

First of all, I think you have to work for this understanding — this awareness, this feeling of all African people that we have a job to do, and this job has not been done. And then from there, we take the necessary steps.

I am a believer first in understanding. And to go back to the Congress, I think the Congress should work for this under-

standing. We should ask this question: 'Have we reached the end or is this simply the beginning?'

And then get somewhere. And I'm saying the answer ought to be, throughout our regions: 'No. We have not reached the end. We have just seized the first instruments of power in beginning our historical march.'

Q: To be more specific about the 6th Pan African Congress, what are some of the issues that you think can be raised for discussion at this Congress?

JAMES: Now the most important issues that have to be raised at the Congress, I think, are stated in the document that has been published by the 6th PAC, the Call. *Number one*: Self-reliance. Self-reliance is an abstract phrase, a difficult phrase to explain in concrete terms. You cannot go to the midst of Africa and tell an African peasant: 'You must be self-reliant.' He will say: 'Yes, I am very self-reliant, but I have no money. I have no seeds, I am starving.' But the concept of self-reliance, the belief that the future of Africa must depend upon the Africans relying upon themselves and using what they have and seeking what they want with their own conception — I believe if the Congress is permeated by this idea, it is certain to bring out a great deal that would be of great importance in the world. *Second point*: The second thing that I think of in regard to the 6th PAC, is the freedom of Southern Africa. I mean that is a question that has been talked about for a long time, but now it is an urgent matter. It is a matter that white and black are looking at, and people who we once thought were quiet and were not going to take much of any steps are now actively progressing and putting themselves forward and challenging the white governments. The European and other governments are very much aware of the danger that faces them if the people of Southern Africa raise themselves. We too are concerned with the complete independence of Southern Africa; and I believe they will get that independence in Southern Africa more quickly and more freely than the blacks of the United States. They are such a tremendous majority of the population. *Number Three* is the change in the economic structure of the colonial territories. You know they gave us, or we took, political freedom and we ran up a National flag, we had a National anthem, we had a Prime Minister who would go to England and have tea, or dinner with the Queen (dinner was special). But the people have realised that political freedom is not sufficient. Political freedom means that you are to settle your own political affairs. Most of the black political leaders at least recognise this today. Political freedom must also mean economic control of your own material affairs. There is no

real political freedom if other people control your material circumstances, the material goods that you produce and the persons and prices to whom you sell and what you arrange with those people. All that has got to be under the control of the African people themselves. If I may be allowed to say so: It is not only the African people, but a whole set of people all over the Third World, who have to be in control of their material circumstances. And the real things that matter are these three things:

1) Self-reliance — that is, a mental concept, but which all people can have. You do not have to read it in any books. Now Nkrumah was able to instill that into the people of Ghana; that was what caused the great success of the revolution in Ghana. It was a form of self-reliance and we place that foremost.

2) The freedom of Southern Africa — that situation has gone on long enough and the Southern Africans are quite ready to take whatever steps are necessary. What they are depending upon, what I think they must be looking at, is to the rest of Africa and what we are doing. Well, the 6th PAC had made up its mind to do all that it can.

3) The third point, maybe the most important and the most immediate, complete control over economic and financial life. Not the flag, or the National anthems, nor the Prime Ministers, but complete control over economic and social life. That is what I think the 6th Pan African Congress stands for, that is what it is aiming at, that is what it has proclaimed and a great distinction between that and the 5th PAC is that people everywhere are thinking in those terms. They may not be thinking in the exact terms of the 6th PAC, but those are the ideas that are running about in the minds of black people.

Q: On the last point that you made, the question of economic independence and control, there is a intense discussion going on in the entire African world about which path to economic control. Do you have any ideas about that?

JAMES: I have very strong ideas and I am very happy that these strong ideas are not my own, they are the ideas publicly stated, in my opinion, certainly by a political figure today whose ideas, political prospects and programmes are not exceeded by any living politician. Here is Dr. Nyerere speaking about what he thinks about the future of Africa, and he calls his lecture *The Rational Choice*. I will read for you some of what he says. This is his conclusion: 'It cannot be denied that many difficulties face a Third World country which chooses the socialist alternative of development.' Don't rush too quickly to think that by socialism Dr. Nyerere believes what is taking place in Russia, in Eastern Europe, not at all. For

he says: 'Not least among these are its own past, the dynamism of capitalist initiative techniques, and the gambler instinct which every human being seems to possess, so that we all hope we shall be among the privileged, not the exploited. But I believe that we can choose the socialist path, and that by so doing we can develop ourselves in freedom . . . ' You see, he is not only pointing out socialism, but including everything in the hands of the government. He continues:

We can choose the socialist path, and that by so doing we can develop ourselves in freedom, and towards those conditions which allow dignity and self-respect for every one of our citizens. I believe that this prospect must be pursued, with vigour and determination. We shall not create socialist societies overnight; because we have to start from where we are, we shall have to make compromises with capitalist money and skill, and we shall have to take risks in our development. But I am convinced that Third World countries . . .

That is a very significant thing, he does not speak only about Africa, he speaks about Third World countries, all of them — that means India, China, Indo-China and seven-eighths of South America. He goes on to say: ' . . . Third World countries have the power to transform themselves, over time, into socialist societies in which their peoples can live in harmony and cooperation as they work together for their common benefit.' That is the idea of socialism that I have. That is the conception which I believe we must all have. Sometime ago Dr. Nyerere wrote *Ten Years Work and Progress in Tanzania*, and he did a wonderful review of what had happened in Tanzania for the past ten years, and in this document he made a statement which I believe is of the first importance for political organisations and people all over the world in economically advanced and in underdeveloped countries. He says: 'We have gradually realised that public ownership of enterprises is not enough. These enterprises may be, and in most cases in Tanzania, have been managed well and with the intention of serving the interest of the Tanzanian people . . . ' In other words, he is saying that they have taken away the imperialist financial element, they have put Tanzani-

ans in charge, Tanzanians are working them well and working them in the interest of the Tanzanian people. That ought to be good enough, shouldn't it? We should feel fine. But he says:

. . . but they are still being managed for the people. By the Tanzanians it is true, and in the interest of the Tanzanians it is true, but they are still being managed for the people, and only by them in the sense that the decisions are taken by Tanzanians appointed by and responsible to an elected Government.

This is a man *extremely* sensitive to what the average worker is thinking, for he says:

. . . they watch the work being done, they watch the advances being made, they see that it is being done by Tanzanians, they realise that the Tanzanians who are in charge are appointed by and are responsible to an elected Government, but they are not satisfied. Consequently, the people who are not in managerial positions in the public corporations still do not feel that these corporations are theirs.

Now we've got to go to Tanzania to get a political leader to state that!

Mr. Heath has held his Commonwealth Conference. What he did the other day was to appoint a lot of workers on to the corporations Boards. He appoints workers to the Boards, but Nyerere is not doing that: ' . . . Consequently, the people who are not in managerial positions still do not feel that these corporations are theirs.' You can pick up five or six of them and stick them on the Boards. They have been doing that in the United States. But Nyerere says that: ' . . . Even the workers in the organisations frequently feel that they are working for "them" . . . ' *Them* means for those who are in charge and not for themselves. Now I believe that there you have a perspective and conception, a sensitivity for what workers want. They want to be able to be in charge, they do not want to be managed, they do not want to be pushed around, they do not just want effective people, they are not particular to have people who do the work well — that is good, but that is not their main aim. Their main aim is that they are in control of the work that they are doing, and I for one believe, and I've said for many years, that then the work would be done better than ever before.

Q: Are there any other points you would make about the Congress?

JAMES: Just this — a conference like the 6th Pan African Congress represents the fact that a substantive number of human beings feel the need for a change in the political policy that they've been following during the previous period. Every time a conference takes place, it marks a stage in the political development and interest of the people taking part in it, and those to whom appeal is being made for support. We've already made clear what the 6th Pan African Congress stands for, and its relationship to previous

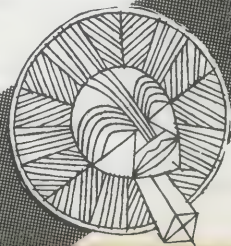
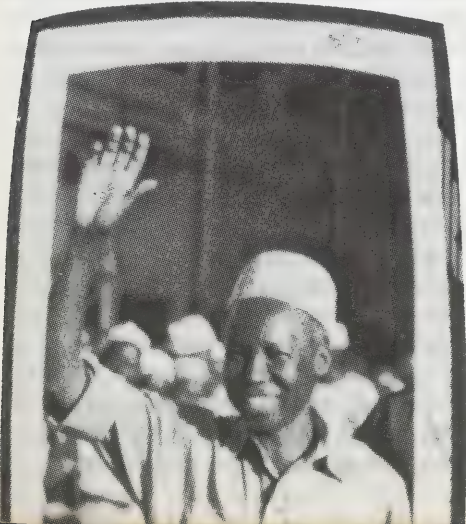
Congresses. Now, we have added something new that never was taken up by any of the previous conferences. I will read the passage from *The Call*: 'Consistent with our commitment to independence and self-reliance, the 6th Pan African Congress will pursue the development of a Pan African Science and Technology Centre. The Centre will be designed to serve the vast array of needs of African people in the scientific and technological fields . . . ' Now this is a Centre that will be organised by African people, supported by African people, and run by African people. Its aim will be to accumulate in one particular spot a Centre both for the accumulation of material and information, and for getting together persons ready and willing to participate in the scientific and technical development of African people. At the same time, the Centre will be a sort of exhibition hall where the work that has been done and the work that is still to be done can be seen in one spot.

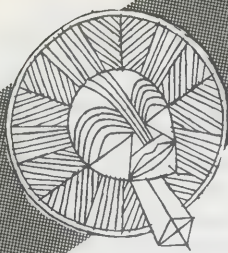
The Centre expresses the two aspects of self-reliance and political self-determination. It will be directly under our control, and will stand ready to fight against the present domination that scientists and technologists of advanced countries exert over our people's development. This is entirely new! I doubt if there have been many political conferences in the past which have planned so definite a stage towards a new sphere of activity. We're certain that today, with all the calls for assistance being made from various parts of the African world, the 6th PAC and everybody connected with it, should concentrate on making the Science-Technology Centre a nucleus for development of the need and interests of the vast majority of African people. That brings to a close what the conference stands for, and where it stands in the long-range of Pan African Congresses.

STEERING COMMITTEE APPEAL

Black organisations in Britain are organising a delegation to participate in the 6th PAC. We are also conducting a campaign to inform black people in this country about the Congress and what it stands for. To do this and send a representative delegation to the Congress we urgently need to raise £7,000.

We are appealing to all organisations and individuals concerned about the development of Africa to send any contributions, financial or otherwise, to: Steering Committee, British Delegation, Sixth Pan African Congress, 61 Golborne Road, London W.10.





'CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH FULL NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE'

The following paper, delivered in 1973 at the University of Khartoum as part of Sudan's seventh Anniversary of Independence, adds considerable weight to the body of socialist thought being developed in the writings and speeches of Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania.

My subject is an examination of the alternative economic and social systems which are open to Third World countries. In order to keep within reasonable bounds I must make certain assumptions. Fortunately, these are not very controversial at least within Africa.

The Assumptions

My first assumption is that any discussion about the appropriate economic and social organisation must, for the time being at least, be conducted within each nation state, and the decision must be made exclusively by the people of that nation. Thus, it is the people of Tanzania as a whole, or the Sudan as a whole who will decide the path for their country. Tanzania cannot decide for the Sudan, nor vice versa. The fact that, for example, Zanzibar within the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Southern Provinces within Sudan, have autonomy in certain matters means that in these respects the smaller units will be the unit of choice rather than the nation as a whole.

Secondly, I take it to be axiomatic that all the peoples of the Third World desire to govern themselves, and want their country to be completely independent from external control. This does not rule out the possibility of political or economic links between two or more countries; nor does it exclude a possible voluntary merger of sovereignties, provided that these things are agreed upon after discussions based on the equality of all participants.

Thirdly, I shall assume that, to everyone in the Third World, the present degree of poverty, and the general lack of economic development, is completely unacceptable. We have to increase our production of wealth so that we may increase the level of our collective and individual consumption.

My fourth and final assumption is that our struggles for independence were national struggles, involving the rights of all the inhabitants. We were not aiming to replace our alien rulers

by a local privileged elite, but to create societies which ensure human dignity and self-respect for all. The concomitant of that is that every individual has the right to the maximum economic and political freedom which is compatible with equal freedom for all others; and that neither well-fed slavery nor the necessity to beg for subsistence are acceptable human conditions.

I have said that these assumptions are not very controversial within Africa. It is equally true that they do not represent the present situation. They represent aspirations rather than facts. That is obvious from an examination of world affairs, or from the briefest visit to any of our rural areas or even to those urban areas where our unskilled labourers live.

The Choice

In the modern world there are two basic systems of economic and social organisation — capitalism and socialism. There are variations within these broad classifications, like welfare capitalism or humanistic socialism; but the broad distinction is between the two systems and our first choice has to be between them.

Yet, I now propose to argue that there is no real choice. In practice Third World nations cannot become developed capitalist societies without surrendering the reality of their freedom and without accepting a degree of inequality between their citizens which would deny the moral validity of our independence struggle and that our present poverty and national weakness make socialism the only rational choice for us.

Capitalism and Independence

Under a capitalist system the purpose of production and distribution is the making of profit for those who own the means of production and exchange. The need for goods is subsidiary to the profit involved in making them. Therefore the owner of the machines and equipment used in production — that is, he who provides the money for these things — is the one who determines whether there shall be any production and of what kind, and in what quantity. Neither the men who provide the labour for the production, nor the men who need the goods which could be produced have any say in these decisions. Under capitalism, money is King. He who owns wealth owns also power. He has power over all the workers whom he can employ or not,

and power over the governments which he can paralyse by withholding vital production, or sabotage by the manipulation of men and machines.

That has always been the essence of capitalism. But there is a further relevant fact in these decades of the twentieth century. That is that this power is now concentrated in very few hands. For whereas one hundred years ago a quite small amount of money sufficed to establish an industrial or commercial enterprise, modern technology now precludes this in all important areas of production. Thus, for example, Henry Ford could begin his manufacture of cars in a bicycle repair shop, and build up his capacity bit by bit.

Mass Production

But now, in the 1970s, anyone who decides to begin making vehicles must be prepared to make a multi-million dollar investment before the first one rolls off the assembly line. Mass production techniques make small units uneconomic.

This development is part of the dynamic of capitalism — for capitalism is very dynamic. It is a fighting system. Each capitalist enterprise survives by successfully fighting other capitalist enterprises. And the capitalist system as a whole survives by expansion, that is, by extending its area of operations and in the process eradicating all restraints upon it, and all weaker systems of society.

Consider now what this means for the new nations of the Third World. According to capitalist theory, if we choose capitalism our citizens would be free to establish capitalist enterprises, and these capitalists would compete — that is, would fight — all other capitalist enterprises, including the foreign ones. In practice, however, two questions immediately arise. First, where are those citizens who have sufficient capital to establish modern industries; and second, how would our infant industries fight other capitalist enterprises?

I believe the answer to these questions is clear in all Third World countries. For Tanzania is no exception in not having within its borders the kind of wealth which is necessary to establish modern industrial units. As a general rule no individual, or group of individuals, from within any of our nations has the capacity to establish even a large modern textile mill, much less to operate a diamond mine, put up a steel mill, or run a large-

scale commercial enterprise. That amount of money, and that kind of expertise, just do not exist. Certainly, the most which could be done by Tanzanians is the establishment of little workshops, which either assemble imported components, or which undertake simple processing of locally produced crops. Our citizens can establish small retail shops; wholesaling on any economic scale is likely to demand more resources than they have.

In fact, Third World capitalism would have no choice except to cooperate with external capitalism, as a very junior partner. Otherwise it would be strangled at birth. You cannot develop capitalism in our countries without foreign capitalists, their money and their management expertise. And these foreign capitalists will invest in Third World countries only if, when, and to the extent that they are convinced that to do so would be more profitable to them than any other investment.

Development through capitalism therefore means that we Third World nations have to meet conditions laid down by others — by capitalists of other countries.

External Power

In fact, a reliance upon capitalist development means that we give to others the power to make vital decisions about our economy.

It is claimed that this would be a temporary phenomenon, as foreign capitalist investment in a Third World country would be a catalyst for local capitalist enterprise. To some extent this is true; small local businesses may grow up in the shadow of a major, foreign-owned, factory. But all such businesses would have the purpose of providing service to the workers of the big industry, or of making small components for it. They would therefore be absolutely dependent upon it, flourishing when it expanded and collapsing if it closed down.

Local businesses would thus be the puppets, not the enemies of the foreign enterprise — the subsidiaries, not the competitors. They would be forced to identify themselves with all demands made by the foreign capitalists. The loss of real national self-determination would therefore be increased not decreased; for the foreign owners would have secured a local political base to back up their economic power.

This is very easy to understand. If the Government, for example, proposes to lay down new minimum wages or to raise revenue from a tariff on goods of interest to the factory, the big employer may say — politely or otherwise — that in such a case they will close their factory. They can point out that this will not only result in a loss of livelihood for all those directly employed; it will also force into

bankruptcy a number of ancillary units. Of course, the independent government can still go ahead with its proposals; but it will then have to deal with the consequences — and they are not likely to be pleasant for either that government or the people it wishes to serve.

Nor is this all. Foreign policy questions will also be affected by reliance upon foreign capitalists for economic development. It is true that American, British, or Japanese capitalists have no patriotic loyalty to their country of origin. But they do have loyalty to their largest investments — and these are unlikely to be inside any one underdeveloped country! Therefore, a poor nation's quarrel with one of the imperialist countries about, for example, its support for Zionist expansionism, or for South Africa, Rhodesia, or Portuguese colonialism, can easily lead to the withdrawal of capitalist expansion plans, or even to the contradiction and eventual closing of established enterprises.

Given the present inequalities between nations, capitalist development is incompatible with full national independence for Third World countries. For such development will be foreign owned, and foreign controlled; local capitalists will be subsidiary, and will remain subsidiary.

The fact that a number of competing big capitalist institutions may invest in a particular developing country — perhaps from different foreign bases — does not

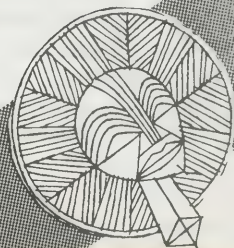
invalidate this simplified analysis. As a general rule the meaning is that the poor country has given several hostages to fortune instead of one. In theory it can endeavour to play one enterprise off against another; but in practice it is much more likely to discover that its economic destiny has been determined by enterprise conflicts which originate outside its own borders, and about which it knows nothing! A 'take-over bid', or a rationalisation scheme, or a new cartel arrangement, can undo years of local negotiation, and the independent government may well hear about the prospect only if one giant or the other hopes to use it in order to get better terms for its own shareholders!

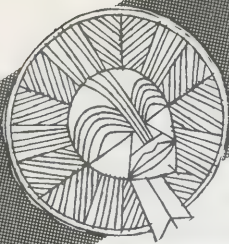
Capitalism and the Nature of Society

This inevitable loss of real national freedom is, however, only one of those results of capitalism which I believe to be incompatible with the national purposes of all Third World Governments. For capitalism does not only imply a fight between capitalists, with the developing nations' capitalists inevitably being worsted. It also involves a permanent fight between capitalists on one side and workers on the other.

This is a very important matter for us, coming as most of the African Third World countries do out of primitive communalism into the modern world. For it means a new factor of national division at a time when all of us are still fighting to overcome the divisive forces of tribalism, religion, and race. It also means that the fruits of independence will be denied to the mass of the people who worked for it, or in whose name it was demanded.

There is no escaping this effect of capitalism. For the purpose of capitalist enterprise is the making of profit. To do this, the capitalist must keep his costs of production as low as possible, and get the maximum return from the sale





of the products. In other words, he must pay the lowest wages for which he can get workers, and charge the maximum price at which he can sell the goods produced. A permanent conflict of interest between the worker and the employer inevitably follows.

Thus capitalism automatically brings with it the development of two classes of people: a small group whose ownership of the means of production brings them wealth, power and privilege; and a very much larger group whose work provides that wealth and privilege. The one benefits by exploiting the other, and a failure in the attempt to exploit leads to a breakdown of the whole system with a consequent end to all production! The exploitation of the masses, in fact, the basis on which capitalism has won the accolade for having solved the problem of production. There is no other basis on which it can operate. For if the workers ever succeeded in obtaining the full benefits of their industry, then the capitalist would receive no profit and would close down the enterprise!

What this means for the masses of the people in the Third World countries should be obvious. The conditions of employment, and their return from employment will be just sufficient to maintain the labour supply. Further, if the nation is dependent upon capitalist investment for all its desired economic expansion, the workers will have to be prevented from organising themselves to fight for their rights. For an effective Trade Union struggle might lead the employer to argue once again that his factory has become uneconomic. The resultant threat of a close down may well prompt the government to intervene on the side of the employers in order to safeguard the economic growth rate and its own miserably small, but vital, tax revenue.

Development through capitalism is thus basically incompatible with the fourth aspiration listed – that of human dignity and self-respect for all, with equal freedom for all inhabitants of the society. For capitalism means that the masses will work, and a few people – who may not labour at all – will benefit from that work. The few will sit down to a banquet, and the masses will eat whatever is left over.

This has a fourth implication. With a

capitalist system the production of goods, measured statistically, may well go up considerably; if it happens to possess certain mineral resources, the Third World country may even find itself high on the list of 'successful states' as regards the growth rate of its Gross National Product. But the mass of the people, who produce the goods which are measured, will be without sufficient money to buy the things they need for a decent life. Their demand will exist, but it will not be effective. Consequently, the production of basic necessities – decent houses, food and nice clothes – will be limited; such production would be less profitable to the capitalist investor than the provision of 'luxury goods'. It was no accident, for example, that one of the early post-independence investments in Tanzania was a Drive-In Cinema. Much more profit could be made from using cement that way than in producing workers' houses!

For on top of everything else, the choice of capitalism as the road to development means a particular kind of production and a particular kind of social organisation. Rural water supplies will have a low priority, regardless of the fact that they are needed for the health of the people.

The Alternative of Socialism

To argue that capitalism is incompatible with the aspirations of the Third World does not mean that the alternative of socialism is an easy one, nor that success under it is automatic. But socialism can be compatible with our aspirations; by adopting socialist policies it is possible for us to maintain our independence and develop towards human dignity for all our people.

The vital point is that the basis of socialist organisation is the meeting of people's needs, not the making of profit. The decision to devote the nation's resources to the production of one thing rather than another is made in the light of what is needed, not what is most profitable. Furthermore, such decisions are made by the people through their responsible institutions – their own government, their own industrial corporations – their own commercial institutions. They are not made by a small group of capitalists, either local or foreign – and the question of foreign domination through economic ownership is thus excluded. Further the workers of the nation can receive – directly or indirectly – the full fruits of their industry; there is no group of private owners which constantly appropriates a large proportion of the wealth produced.

None of this means that great inequalities within the society, or the exploitation of groups, or even the seizure of power and privilege by a small minority,

is automatically ruled out in society which opts for socialism. Looking around the world we can see so-called socialist countries where all these things happen. But my point is that such things mark a failure to implement socialism; they are not inherent in it in the way that they are inherent in capitalism.

The major argument used against socialism for the developing world is, in fact, that it will not work, and that all socialist states are poor states because of their socialism. There are fundamental points to consider, however.

The first is that to measure a country's wealth by its Gross National Product is to measure things, not satisfactions. An increase in the sale of heroin, in a country where this is legal, would be recorded as an increase in its national wealth; if human well-being was the unit of measurement, such an increase of sales would be a negative factor.

My second point is that a successful harlot, or a favoured slave, may be better off materially than a woman who refuses to sell her body, or a man to sell his freedom. We do not regard the condition of the harlot or slave as being consequently enviable – unless, of course, we are starving, and even then we recognise the possible amelioration in our circumstances as being uncertain and insecure.

Thirdly, I do not accept that the so-called unworkability of socialism has been proved. Capitalism has been developing for about two centuries. The first national commitment to socialism was made in 1917, by a backward and feudal nation devastated by war, which has subsequently suffered greatly from further civil and international conflict. Even so, few people would deny the material transformation which has been effected in USSR during the past 57 years. And in fact, despite the major criticisms which can be made of all the socialist countries, it is difficult to argue that their peoples are worse off than the late capitalist starters – countries like Greece, or Spain, or Turkey, for example. On the contrary, they are clearly better off in the vital matters of health, education, and the security of their food and shelter. Whether or not they have the same number of television sets seems to me to be much less important.

Conclusion

It cannot be denied that many difficulties face a Third World country which chooses the socialist alternative of development.

But I believe that we can choose the socialist path, and that by so doing we can develop ourselves in freedom, and towards those conditions which allow dignity and self-respect for every one of our citizens.

BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to last month's article, 'Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa', February's 'The Black Explosion in Schools' and January's 'Sex, Race and Working Class Power'.

Nationalism's Revolutionary Potential

Sir,

In his otherwise excellent article, 'Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa', what is most regrettable is Ken Jordaan's dismissive reference to 'purely nationalist programmes demanding non-racial democracy within the capitalist framework', without even an allusion to the potent revolutionary force that is nationalism in the historical South African situation. It is a serious crime of omission.

He contends, with some justification, that 'the South African State was so constructed as to preclude the emergence of a black middle-class strong enough to play a leading role' in the struggle against oppression, and that its weakness 'prevents the development of a nationalist movement for a neo-colonial solution'. In fact, however, it is this same weak middle-class, sole breeder of revolutionary intellectuals, which has so far played and continues to play a leading role in the national liberation movement.

It is perhaps significant that these dismissive remarks are thrown into his conclusions, out of the blue, the subject having featured nowhere in the burden of his analysis. We are not told, for instance, what the weaknesses of the black middle-class are; no, simply that it is weak. Yet compared with its counterparts in the rest of Africa wherever a 'neo-colonial solution' can be said to have been found, its record shows that the black South African middle-class is politically very strong indeed.

Moreover, in a very real sense its weak economic position is also a factor in its impressive political record. Without shares or any kind of meaningful stake in the economy, it stands to lose nothing in a plummeting stock market during a period of radical political action. There is no need to underplay or disparage this class or the national liberation movement in order to project the black working-class as a potential revolutionary force.

Indeed, one does not even need to go to South Africa to discover that attribute of the black working-class, or any other country's working-class for that matter. The guidelines were given about 150 years ago by Karl Marx. All one needs to know is what economic system is followed in a country to make reasonable assumptions about its socio-economic conditions. In the case of South Africa, of course, the

question of race is an additional factor, but not a terribly complicating one.

What is needed in assessing prospects for a revolution is a different matter. What is the concrete situation? Jordaan's article contrives the effect of relegating the middle-class and the national liberation movement to a lowly position by blowing up the recent wave of black workers' strikes in South Africa out of proportion to their significance and presents them as a revolutionary movement. This picture is not supported by the facts, unless it can be contended that any strike action by workers to improve their lot is *per se* revolutionary, in which case Jordaan would have no reason to quarrel with trade unionism, even of the Lord Feather type.

It is not for us exiles lightly to sit in judgment over those directly in the line of fire, but neither is it for us to dupe them or ourselves. Their activities are certainly an important step in the right direction, a relatively radical one in South African conditions, but it is sobering to reflect that they are not unique in South African history, and disquieting that they are not an improvement on their predecessors.

A well-publicised and partially successful strike of black dockers in Cape Town at the end of 1919, on the anvil of the October and post-war militancy, touched off a countrywide strike fever beside which the recent wave pales. It grew in intensity during a turbulent decade, with 40,000 Africa miners coming out on the Reef in 1920, in spite of much bloodshedding by police bullets in Port Elizabeth the same year, and went on regardless of shootings of black workers by their fellow white miners on the Rand in 1922. (The latter shooting did not involve a strike by black workers, but they were caught up in industrial unrest with an intimidating effect on them.)

This tidal wave of strikes accounted for the meteoric growth throughout the 'twenties of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa (ICU), which had organised the successful strike at the Cape docks, its very first strike action. But it would be a bad historian indeed who would talk of that phenomenal rise in black workers' militancy (Reds under the bed?) as a revolutionary movement, not just because it eventually collapsed and we know how, but because the collapse was due to the fact that, like the present strikes, it had no coherent political philosophy, let alone revolutionary objectives.

There are no political aims or coherent

philosophy at all for the present strikers but sheer economism. The average paltry wage increases which satisfied the 150,000 strikers and others throughout 1973, for the most part abysmally small in the light of the generally depressed living standards of the workers and persisting inflationary conditions, were hardly worth the strikers' trouble. Yet the process could be repeated year after year, with similar increases often granted without any fuss and the unperturbed employers only too pleased to make yet another gesture.

That is trade unionism *par excellence*, even without formal organisation. And the fact that the authorities, while pouncing on students and political clerics, made little or no effort to suppress the strikes by no means suggests an apparent revolutionary situation. Indeed, throughout their history, whenever the black workers espoused political aspirations, it has been under the leadership of the middle-class. Then they were capable of radical political action.

In our exhilaration with the Socialist millennium, we must not soar above the ground. To say the Revolution must be Socialist is not the same thing as *making* a revolution. Before the black workers get to know of their exploitation and power, a process that is far from being half-complete, they know they are oppressed as a nation, a whole people dispossessed of their land. Every chapter of the authentic history of South Africa tells of this infamy, the story of dispossession, and every black son sucks it from the breast of his mother.

Battles won and lost in wars of resistance against the colonists teem with great feats of heroism in a saga that is passed down from generation to generation by oral tradition. By the fireside, graying heads told it from direct experience and then, dying, uttered solemn words exhorting the young to redeem the land — a sacred trust, as it were. It is the language of African Nationalism, of African national consciousness, born of a common bitter experience — military, economic and political — amongst the various tribes in South Africa.

Its political force as a nation-building agency was so to scare Verwoerd, evil genius of Afrikanerdom; that he invented the monstrosity called ethnic grouping, the divisive separate development of the so-called Bantu tribal homelands. But that force remains so strong there that even after 20 years of ethnic grouping, the Bantustan chiefs who had succumbed to it recovered sufficiently to hold a

summit conference last November, from which a call for black solidarity and single nationhood rung out. Only a few will have missed the historic significance of that event.

Genuine Marxists since Lenin have been strong advocates of the right of nations to self-determination. However, it has not escaped our attention that in South Africa some Marxists have been less than lukewarm on the national question. There will be socialism as well as nations everywhere except in South Africa, because those with a prior historical right and other commanding qualifications to nationhood happen to be black in a country effectively occupied by whites.

One is reminded of the German Marxists-cum-social chauvinists who were quite ready to condemn the crimes of British imperialism in India while keeping their cool on similar crimes in Germany's own colonies. To their credit some British Marxists known as The Study Group, of 72 Compton Street, E.C.1., unreservedly acknowledge their right of their determination for the black people of South Africa.

In their pamphlet, *Stalin's 'Definition' of a Nation*, they correctly point out that the fight for national self-determination is, in general, 'a fight against imperialism, social-imperialism and reaction. This fight is therefore a component part of the world proletarian revolution'. Our contention is that the black people's right to self-determination cannot be compromised by the fact that whites have acquired a living space in our country.

The fight for it goes on regardless of the future of the whites, who must decide for themselves, and indeed would go on even if either capitalism or socialism had never been invented. But since we are

conscious of our dynamic and contemporary environment, ourselves steeped in socialist traditions, we look to future planning of our lives based on the modern technology of scientific socialism. The question whether strangers — as distinct from enemies — may or may not belong in our midst is foreign to our traditions.

Learning in the crucible of struggle and guided towards Socialist goals by trained revolutionary cadres, all progressive and patriotic elements are brought together in the national liberation movement, confident in the belief that, as Mao Tse-tung says: 'In the final analysis, the national struggle is a question of class struggle.' We cannot go on, to quote Regis Debray, 'as if declaring a thousand times that the revolution should be socialist would help call it into existence.'

Matthew Nkoana

Through Trade Unionism to Socialism

Sir,

Ken Jordaan's article, 'Trade Unionism versus Revolution in South Africa' showed up very clearly how the TUC delegation which visited South Africa last year served the interests of British imperialism. It is most significant that the leader of that delegation was rewarded with a peerage soon after he returned.

Ken Jordaan has also clearly shown how ruthlessly African workers are exploited by the white racist state machinery as the hand-maiden of foreign imperialist interests. He has underlined the importance of the black proletariat as the vanguard in fighting against imperialism and racism and in establishing socialism in South Africa.

The flaws in his argument lie in his attempts at drawing 'conclusions of far-reaching political importance'. These amount to one thing — the black workers in the cities will rise up and shake the world. He dismisses with alarming ease the question of *how* this uprising will succeed in overthrowing the apartheid state, and the role of the 'black middle class', the 'tribal bureaucracy', and 'Christian radicals' in this process. He does not even concede the necessity for the black proletariat to be *led* by its revolutionary political party in its struggle to win political power. He glides over the question of 'nationalist programmes' and takes the black workers in the cities to be a homogeneous lot of people with the same language, culture and employment status. He ignores completely the regular reports of 'faction fights' in the rural areas of South Africa, and the significance of the armed struggles of liberation movements in Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe.

If Jordaan pins his hopes on the growing wages and stability of skilled African workers in the cities, let him remember that the vast majority of African urban workers are still manual labourers facing constant instability from the fluctuating needs of the white-run capitalist economy. There is still a great deal of movement of wage-earners to and from the African homelands and most men in the towns still do not have their families with them. The stability of town life only applies to some higher-paid skilled African workers.

Another fact of considerable importance is that two-thirds of the African population still live in the rural areas, one-half as squatters on white farms and one-half in the tribal areas. The aspirations of these rural Africans for land means that those who may not be regarded by some as being peasants now, wish indeed to become peasants! And there have been many peasant revolts (the most recent being the Pondo revolt in 1960) which attest to their revolutionary nature.

I dispute Jordaan's contention that the struggle for democracy in South Africa 'can be waged only by the black workers'. The struggle for democratic rights has been joined by many groups giving more or less militant support for these demands. It is clear from the experience of other colonised countries that it is only when this struggle is led by the proletariat that its fullest potential is achieved and the struggle to establish socialism develops. In leading this struggle the black workers must make alliances with other oppressed classes and nationalities. The most important alliance is with the poor and landless peasants. It is also necessary to make an alliance with the national bourgeoisie (African teachers, clerks, civil servants, nurses, professionals, small businessmen and patriotic chiefs). It would be wrong to disregard the influential position of this class, however small it may seem to be numerically. The same applies to the Coloured and Asian peoples as a whole. To ignore them is to drive them straight into the hands of the main enemy — the imperialist-backed white supremacist state.

Trade unionism and revolution are not antithetical ideas. The struggle to build trade unions in the fight for better wages and working conditions has been teaching black workers the strength of united action and the basis of their exploitation. Thus it can lead workers to understand the necessity for revolution. But neither trade unions nor spontaneous strike movements can win final victory against imperialism and its lackies. Only a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party can lead the working-class and the people to victory. The South African Communist Party sometimes lays claim to this role but it has long degenerated into a clique



of Moscow agents who dish out the revisionist trash of their masters.

I think that the main content of the revolution in South Africa will be the liberation of the African masses and the creation of a new-democratic state. The main tactic in this revolution will be the establishment of cadres in the countryside. The main demands will be the expropriation of all foreign-owned monopoly industry, the elimination of all forms of racism, giving land to the peasants and guarantees of cultural autonomy and equality to all national groups. But before the struggle can develop to a higher stage, the vanguard party must make its appearance as it inevitably will.

Costa Gazidis

Neo-colonial Bantustans

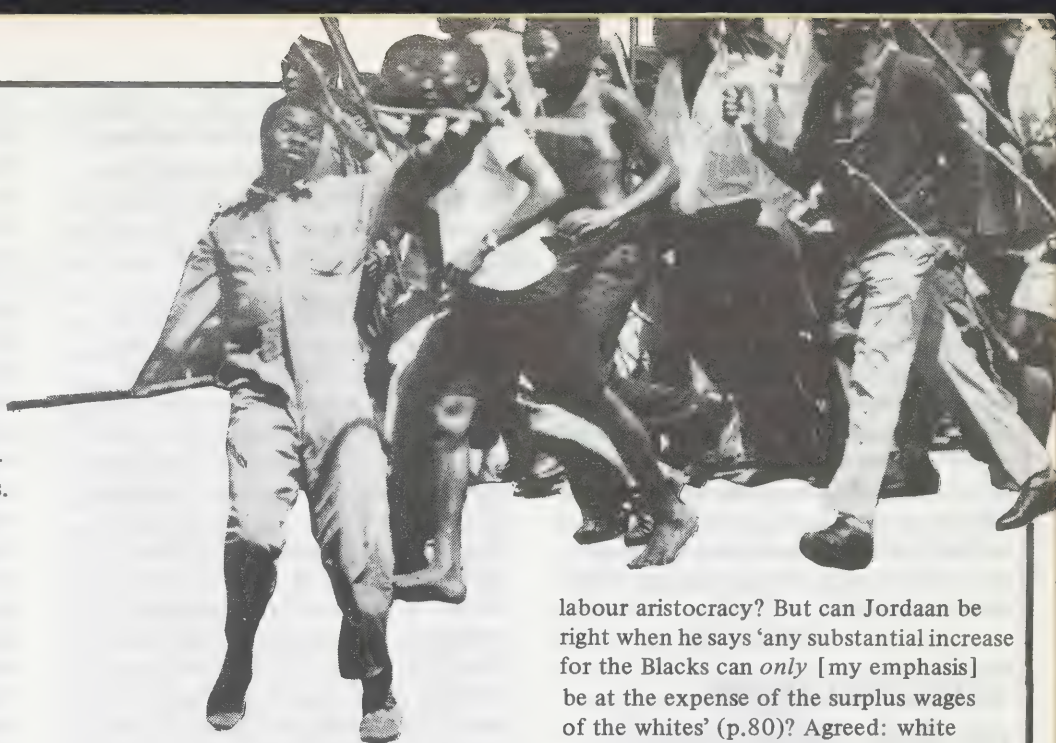
About Ken Jordaan's article, I share his sharp reaction against the proposals of the TUC delegation to South Africa, and his general analysis of apartheid's super-exploitation system. May I make a few additional points and some slight differences of emphasis, possibly for future discussion?

1. That projected ICFTU-TUC £100,000 fund is for legal assistance and strike pay but it is also to form unions, and control union organisers, and thus policy, from here. Paragraph 98 of the TUC report says: 'The ICFTU and TUC should seek to establish a national African trade union centre in South Africa to plan on a massive scale the organisation of African workers into trade unions . . . Funds are to employ full-time black organisers . . .' It's been tried before, of course, and is going on in Rhodesia right now. I quote a letter by P.F. Sithole, a trade unionist writing from Bulawayo in the *Rhodesian Herald* of 22 October 1973.

Regrettably indiscriminate financial hand-outs to individual African trade union leaders outside the control of their unions by the ICFTU in Rhodesia are reasons for dividing and retarding the growth of the African labour movement . . . It is appalling to watch African trade union leaders being tossed around from one union to another by international aid without providing any meaningful trade union representation to African workers, cancelling out any economic industrial power that could have developed to improve the economic position of black workers.

Enough said, surely.

2. I agree that the role of trade union officialdom in modern capitalism has been to work within the framework of the system and not to challenge its institutions; that this legitimisation of the rules helps to stabilise the capitalist state; and that in Britain we are even living through times when unions have helped underwrite wage restraint policy said to be in the 'national' interest. However, don't we need, some time, a closer look



at what is surely a more complex relationship between unions and workers of different industries in the present state of British capitalism, between union leaderships and members, and openings towards rank and file struggles in the country? Even in the TUC report on South Africa there are some ambiguities — paternalistic, manipulative, chauvinist policy recommendations but also pages about the mechanisms of the control of African labour in South Africa which match at least part of Jordaan's own descriptions. This could speak of a TUC delegation that was not wholly united, and must in itself reflect conflicting political, union and worker pressures reaching even into the top bureaucratic layer. But the test will be in the rank and file TUC judgement on the delegation's report, which flies in the face of standing TUC Conference policy on South Africa.

3. The most appalling section of the TUC report is its concurrence with the proposals of South African expansionism: 'South Africa could become the workshop, the banker, the merchant, and the principal influence for true civilisation and democracy in the whole of Africa.' Substitute CBI for TUC? It makes one gag. But I think Jordaan makes rather too much of direct TUC influence over white trade union manoeuvres in South Africa since the war. South Africa's white labour-aristocracy unions are perfectly capable of forging the counter-revolution on their own. Was the TUC influential in killing the SATLC in favour of SATUC, or did it, rather, fall into line with white union policies improvised on the spot? Giving the TUC disproportionate influence is not, I think, in strict accord with the facts, but in any case it would tend to discount Jordaan's own analysis of the sources of white worker complicity in the super-exploitation of the African working class.

4. Where outside South Africa is there a more privileged and politically entrenched

labour aristocracy? But can Jordaan be right when he says 'any substantial increase for the Blacks can *only* [my emphasis] be at the expense of the surplus wages of the whites' (p.80)? Agreed: white workers are living well on the results of black workers' super-exploitation but profits are not exactly standing still. Thus the total African wage bill of the Anglo-American Corporation was calculated at R46 million for 1973; working profits for the year ending 1972 were R 250.2 million, or more than five times the total African wage bill. This is not to argue that there is room for a more 'rational' capitalist economic system in South Africa. I believe precisely the opposite: that to effect even minimal reforms in black living standards, will require a radical re-structuring of the economic and political system. It is also not to argue that there is not a basic conflict of interests between white labour-aristocracy and the black workers nor that both white workers and white-run capitalist state are not united in their resistance to a change in class structure. But it is to assert that the primary antagonistic contradiction lies in the exploitative relations between capitalist class and the black working class, with white working class playing an important but essentially supporting and auxiliary role.

4. I agree that the distinctive character of the South African revolution will arise from the size, experience and consciousness of the black working class, and that the weakness of a black urban middle class — and other features of the system — prevents a national liberation movement with neo-colonial perspectives. But elements of a neo-colonial situation of a special apartheid variety are being built in the Bantustans. Here, side by side, is that huge pauperised reserve army of labour, neither peasants nor workers proper, and a Bantustan bureaucracy-chieftainship controlling land and trading allocation rights and collaborator institutions. Western circles hoping to alleviate misery in the Bantustans by routing capital there are labouring under the worst delusion of all: that the Bantustans can 'develop' except along the lines

dictated by the white-run state and capitalist economic system which subordinate not only the Bantustans but much of the sub-continent. But the strategy of the revolution will have to take into account not only the consolidation of the black proletarian consciousness and organisation in the industrial centres, but also the condition and responses of the masses in the Bantustans. The significance of the struggle unfolding there must be sought not in the anguished 'we are only instruments' cries of the Buthelezi, but in the unfolding of mass struggles which will take advantage of the contradictions within Bantustan society and also simultaneously between Bantustans and white ruling class state.

Ruth First

The Struggle of the Peasants

Sir,

I cannot match Ken Jordaan's knowledge of South Africa; nor can I equal his research into racial problems. I would, however, advance some tentative criticisms of formulations in his article 'Trade Unions v. Revolution'. I do so from my knowledge of trade unionism and the relationship of trade unionism to the struggle for a socialist future. My views are exploratory rather than conclusive.

The title of his article defines Ken Jordaan's approach. It assumes that trade unionism and revolution are opposed and mutually exclusive. That which has to be proved is taken as an axiomatic starting point. The conclusions, theoretical and practical, are thus defined in advance.

He bases his approach on the proposition: 'The TUC is a bureaucratic reformist stratum, comprising a labour aristocracy devoted to collaboration with capitalism.' A sweeping valedictory dismissal of nearly two hundred years of British working class history. To hammer his point home, he continues: 'Witness the way the TUC comes to the rescue of capitalism in times of crisis and sells out the interests of the militant British workers.' Over-simplifications of partial truths that turn them into falsehoods. How easy our task if all that stood between a militant working class and a socialist Britain was a handful of reformist bureaucrats! The strength of reformism is that it simultaneously reflects the prevailing mood of the working class at a particular moment in time *and serves to retard its development*. To postulate a working class that would, but for the influence of the TUC, march to victory is to substitute subjective desire for reality. That the historic role of reformism is to defend capitalism *does not* alter the historic role of the trade union movement as the organisation through which workers, by reason of their fight for limited demands, reach an

understanding of the need for fundamental changes in the social structure and so formulate political objectives and create political organisation. It is hard that, despite our desire for simple formulations, change still proceeds in a complex dialectic way.

Having established his base, Ken Jordaan goes on to further subjective conclusions. He states: 'The reforms advocated by the TUC delegation must accordingly be viewed against the background of their history of sponsoring and working in close co-operation with pro-apartheid and racist white trade unions.' What are these demands? Full trade union rights; a living wage; the rate for the job; the repeal of discriminatory legislation; social insurance; universal free education, etc., etc. Objectively — a sweeping revolutionary programme. But Ken Jordaan claims all these are 'empty gestures' because they come 'from a bureaucratic chauvinist body' and because 'entrenched white privilege precludes their peaceful implementation'. Presumably they could be gestures full of meaning if they came from a revolutionary body and could be peacefully implemented? Of course the TUC leaders envisage a South Africa that would be the 'workshop, the banker, the merchant and the principal influence for true civilisation and democracy in the whole of Africa'; a supposition Africa would reject for it implies a subordinate role for other African nations. But if, in seeking this aim, they have to formulate a programme of demands that cannot be accomplished without a social transformation, should not these demands be taken up and supported? — for the consequences of the struggle to achieve the demands would not be those visualised by the TUC!

If an 'entrenched white privilege' advances what is a broad programme of working class objectives, should they not be taken at their word and the demand made that the programme be implemented? If the action of advancing the demands is then seen to be an empty gesture by those who advanced them on behalf of black workers all to the good, for the fight for the demands will continue — emblazoned on the black workers own banners!

Ken Jordaan gives an instance of struggle — the wage struggle of the 'settled workers' in the first three months of 1973. These brought the result that 'vocational and technical training was introduced for a limited number of Africans'. An empty gesture, or a wedge in the door? Ken Jordaan concludes that the 'sharpening of the class struggle in the immediate future' will come from the 'settled labour' that the South African Government has been forced to allow to develop despite its apartheid laws. What form will the struggle take? Demands for a socialist revolution — or for an immedi-

ate programme that will embrace the items listed by the TUC delegation? The issue has only to be raised to be answered. As aspirations that had become their own these aims will not be seen as empty gestures, but as objectives.

Ken Jordaan also advances the proposition that 'least of all can black wages be brought to the level of the whites within the assumptions of the existing order'. Is that then to be a reason for not advancing the legitimate demand of equal pay for the same work? On that basis all struggle short of a complete revolution has to be abandoned, or confined to that which can be achieved 'within the assumptions of the existing order', without causing the government to retreat. Partial victories are victories, even if transient. To fail to fight for such partial victories would mean that the reformists would be left to advance the workers' immediate claims against oppression.

To come to the kernel. After rejecting all help from other sources ('the struggle for the abolition of the colour bar and for democracy can be waged only by black workers'), Ken Jordaan takes a mighty leap — 'Having abolished the colour bar, black workers guided by leaders schooled in scientific socialism will proceed to conquer the commanding heights of the economy.' How is the colour bar to be abolished? Instead of examining the nature of the struggle to abolish, the policies and organisation required, the forces that will have to be overcome, Ken Jordaan assumes the task is accomplished and proceeds from that assumption to scale the 'commanding heights'. Presumably 'entrenched white privilege' will have stood aside and allowed the colour bar to be abolished whilst they still hold the 'commanding heights'.

In twenty odd words Ken Jordaan jumps from the task to be accomplished to the accomplished deed. Enthused by his victory he then sets a new task for the black workers of Africa. 'Having become a class for itself, they can proceed to speak in the name of all oppressed toilers. When they do stand up they will shake South Africa and the world'.

Yes, we must dream, for without the inspiration of our dreams we would not fight, but our dreams must not be fantasies. They must be derived from an understanding of the processes of social development. To romanticise is to fail. Victory will need all the class unity across racial frontiers that we can accomplish. The road to that unity will be long, hard and complex. There are no short cuts. Elitism, whether white or black, leads to defeat. Not revolution versus trade unionism, but through trade unionism to socialism, and in that struggle both black and white workers must become allies.

J.R. Sharkey

The Black Explosion in Schools:

Farrukh Dhondy replies

An extension of the ideas I put forward in 'Black Explosion in Schools' should effectively answer some of the points raised by writers in last month's Backlash. My description of the reaction of black youth to the functions of schooling seems to have found general acceptance from all of them, some of them projecting the essentials of the argument into dimensions I had neglected, omitted or not developed. Michael Froix accuses me of Brixtonising an international phenomenon. It was not my intention and his addition compensates in a way which compels one to agree.

Jeremy Mulford, while arguing that my contentions can apply to both black and white youth in schools, sees black youth performing a vanguard function. Undoubtedly white youth manifest similar and parallel forms of rejection of work, a refusal of authority and discipline and certainly more than a 'scepticism' about schooling. I believe that at the same time as we make assertions about the essential alliance between these forms of rejection, we ought to isolate (only in analysis) the different sub-sections of the working class within the schools. They each have platforms of power which arise out of their rejection of the school system, as it is or even as it could ever be, and by observing and working within schools we witness the growth to maturity of those forms and bases of power.

In spite of a very important cohesiveness, black youth within schools are not a uniform or monolithic entity. There are amongst them, roughly three sub-sections. Reflections not directly of the older generation in the 'productive' employ of the economy, but reflections of trends and organisation in the international black class. The potential power of these sections is based on different things and emerges in different styles and modes of behaviour. For the sake of simplicity, and in defiance of the moralists among us, we may call these three sub-sections the 'workers', the 'black intellectuals' and the 'hustlers'.

The section I call 'workers' shares by and large the ambitions of their fathers and mothers. They are those who behave as though they accept the meritocratic myths of schooling. Quite simply, they care about 'O' and 'A' levels, and they put up a fight within schools to get them. It is on their behalf that parents have fought for better schools, against ghetto schools, that teachers have fought for better resources. Their potential power finds an echo in the more liberal 'educational' resolutions of the National Union of Teachers. Once they lose the fight to go to grammar schools, it is in their interest as a section of the population, to

press for their abolition. They are grist for the mill of comprehensivisation and manage to produce militant parents on the Parent-Teachers' Associations and in autonomous parents' organisations. With teachers they'll fight streaming, banding, boredom. They are potentially capable of pushing reform till it looks like revolution. If there is an organisational creed of revolutionaries for equality, these are their natural recruits. Their planks of power, being black, are to the left of Roy Hattersley (Labour education man), but for now, like their white counterparts, they have been content to let him feel that he speaks for them.

The 'black intellectuals' are products, on the other hand, of an international black consciousness. They have at all times been critical of the functions of schooling. They have articulated their criticism in many ways, quoting and striking poses on the way, looking for ways and strengths to fight school against which they have particularised grievances. To them a denial of identity is a denial of power. They attack the racism implicit in schooling, in textbooks, in written history, and there are finally those among them

Avis Brown replies to Selma James

I find that I have learned so much from what Selma has said that to disagree with her would be ungracious. At the same time, I owe it to myself not to minimize the strength of that disagreement, once I decided to express it. What I write therefore is not in the vein of the sectarian polemics that the white left, brought up in the Bolshevik tradition, is wont to carry out, but in a spirit of struggle and self-criticism.

My answer to Selma's first three questions is 'No'. The movements of blacks qua blacks, feminists qua feminists and schoolchildren qua schoolchildren, are *not* working class movements. They are certainly movements *for* the working class in the result - they aid it by weakening capital - but they are not movements *of* the working class. The danger of identifying them as such is to imply that isolated caste struggles could, without becoming part of (not subsumed to) the larger class struggle, bleed capitalism to death.

Every struggle that is anti-capital is not by itself for revolution. It is however the basis for the strategy and organisation of revolution. It was only when the straight caste struggle of the Dalit Panthers* was enlarged to include the masses of the exploited and the oppressed that it became a threat to the Indian ruling class.

I would like to return to more fundamental disagreements in a later issue.

*An organisation representing the untouchables in India

who demand more black teachers. Their essential political plank is the assertion of what capital and colonialism have denied us, it is in its impure sense, black power. But not necessarily so. I believe that this section is capable of making the link between walking tall and resisting the extraction of surplus value from labour power. In turning their plank into a platform - the black studies course - they have stood firm and taken charge. Of course, they want to speak on behalf of all the sections. They are sometimes bewildered by the reaction of other blacks in school who would rather have a course in motor mechanics than in black history. Black organisations, whose ranks they often swell, can help to shape that 'consciousness' which they see as a weapon.

The last sub-section is the one that gives titles such as 'black explosion' to descriptive articles. It is, I believe, the growing section in the Asian as well as West Indian community. It is their rejection of the grading, skilling and disciplining functions of the labour power manufactory which threatens schooling and also expands the possibilities of class struggle. I would remind those who object that this is a marginal phenomenon, that in politics we fight over boundaries. As refusers at first of certain forms of work, they are a section that offers in extremis a resistance to the productivity deal; they will not be seduced or disciplined by it. If they can force, in and outside the school, the dissociation between being productive and having a wage, they are combatting the workers' destiny within capital. They are by no means wholly 'unemployed' throughout their lives. They work on their own terms in their own time (*all of it*), when it becomes absolutely necessary. Within school their perspective and demand flows from this definition of their own role in the productive economy. Interested though they may be in a reformed curriculum or in black politics, their focal requirement is a wage. With the wage, a powerful organisational focus in itself, goes the potential of altering their relationship as pupils to teachers, to administration and to the school system. The wage is a lubricant for their independence, the basis, in fact, for a solution of the contradiction between them and their parents, between them and the workers that the school system has already stirred and spurred into the productive partnership of work and wage. The demand for the wage is their platform of power.

In what way can these sub-sections support each other? Are they indeed engaged in the same struggle? Does the analysis have to be redone for white youth in schools? The answers define the answers. In some sense they define the task of organisation which is to build the power and link the power of sub-sections of the class. Each to their own homework.

Caribbean Revolutionary Upheaval

The Caribbean masses are challenging imperialism in every single Caribbean country and below we include reports from Martinique, Trinidad and Grenada which indicate the intensity with which these battles are being fought — the sugar workers in Trinidad launch their challenge to a reactionary trade union leadership, the rebellion of Martiniquans against the French colonial order and the movement to establish a revolutionary state in Grenada.

Reports from... ... Martinique

The strategy of the French Colonial Administration has been to create in its colonies a vast reserve army of labour to be called upon to service the French economy. In the last fifteen years that process has been intensified in the French Antilles.

In Martinique, thirteen sugar refineries have been closed down and only two remain in production. Sugar cane production, the largest employer of labour, has been cut from 80,000 tons to 27,000 tons, and it continues to fall. Agriculture has been deliberately run down as the market is flooded with imports from France. Thousands leave the countryside to take up residence in the capital Fort-de-France where 30 per cent of the working population is unemployed.

In this situation the Migration Bureau of Overseas Departments has been active in providing labour for the French economy. In the last ten years the Bureau has arranged for the migration to France of 6,982 families from Martinique, as well as thousands of single workers. These workers are channelled into the service sector of the French economy.

This massive reserve army of labour is presently in the throes of rebellion, giving added depth and breadth to the revolutionary upheaval taking place in every

single Caribbean territory. The French colonial state has instituted a policy of brutal repression. Workers have been teargassed and shot; military reinforcements have been brought in from France to back up the local police. It is in the tradition of French colonial brutality in the Antilles — witness: the Moule Strike in 1952; the dead in Fort-de-France, 1959; the Lamentia Strike, March 1961; the slaughter at Pointe à Pitre, May 1967; and the assassination of Gerard Nouvet, 1971.

The current upheaval began on 10 November 1973 when employers of the daily newspaper *France-Antilles* came out on strike demanding higher wages. Building workers followed suit and after a successful strike won a 20 per cent wage increase. Meanwhile, several small strikes were breaking out in different areas. Of particular significance is the strike of banana workers on the estates in the north of Martinique. On 17 January 1974, they came out on strike for higher wages (the workers are usually only employed for three days per week, which gives them a monthly salary of 450 francs). At the outset of the banana strike the management demanded that the Prefet (Chief Administrator of Martinique) should take responsibility to break the strike, by force if necessary. The president of SICABAM (the company which has the monopoly of the banana industry), Monsieur Guy Fabre, also demanded that the Prefet intervene. From the start of the strike,

each morning, the strikers, in small groups, would visit the banana fields and the homes around, calling on the youth not to break the strike (there are 75,000 unemployed in Martinique between the ages of 18 and 25).

To establish control over this developing strike movement the central trade union leadership called a one-day general strike on 12 February 1974 to protest against the rising cost of living and as a weak-kneed solidarity with the strikes of *France-Antilles*. Electricity workers, dockers, garbage collectors and agricultural workers responded. At the end of the day large sections of the workers, in particular building workers, dockers and teachers refused to return to work. On the morning of 14 February about 100 strikers were going around Basse-Point towards Lorrain, in the north of Martinique, calling on workers not to return to work. The colonial administration launched its counter-attack. The strikers were sandwiched between police cars, then a helicopter dropped tear gas bombs on them. The police opened fire and killed Pierrier Illmany, a 55-year-old agricultural worker. The central trade union organisation quickly disclaimed responsibility for the actions of the strikes, referring to them as non-unionists. The Communist Party called for calm and referred to the banana strikers as provocateurs.

The developing strike movement is on its way, having exposed the grand alliance of the Communist Party, the trade union leadership and the colonial state. The funeral of Illmany set the stage for a massive mobilisation of the Martiniquan working class. On the following day the body of a 19-year-old was discovered on a beach near where the Lorrain shootings took place. He was tortured and killed by the police.

The orthodox political groupings are frantically trying to regain control of the movement. They issued moral denunciations of the assassination, likening it to the Algerian war of Independence. They are seeking to outflank the emerging left-wing organisations who have transformed the traditional movement for autonomy within the French Republic to independence from France and the institution of democratic socialism.



...Grenada

Since independence in Grenada the Britton (part of a telescopic rifle and nineteen bullets). He was allowed out on bail *Observer*, have reported that the Opposition Front in Gairy's regime has disintegrated and that the New Jewel Movement has been crushed. Cause for Concern, the support organisation for the New Jewel Movement, told *Race Today* that the continuing brutal oppression by Gairy's secret police and the fact that Grenada is still at a standstill shows this to be untrue.

On 6 February Maurice Bishop, leader of NJM, was arrested and beaten. After a search on his home he was charged with being in possession of arms and ammunition press, in particular Greg Chamberlain in the *Guardian* and Peter Deeley in the and is to appear in court for a preliminary hearing on 6 March.



Gairy

In Granville on 18 February, nineteen men were arrested and beaten after the theft of 20 pounds of gelignite from Wimpey's construction firm. They were later charged with receiving explosives and being in possession of six rifles. Fourteen of them were confined to one cell.

On 22 February, in Granville, there were violent clashes between opposition supporters and the police resulting in seven policemen being injured. There have been consistent raids on churches, schools and peoples' homes for arms, and many members and supporters of NJM have been 'beaten and shot at'.

In Sauteurs, members and supporters of the opposition have been beaten and arrested and shopkeepers had their property looted.

On 20 February, Carriacou - the island off Grenada - demanded autonomy and the inhabitants went on a tax-strike.

No petrol or imported goods (salt, sugar etc.) are available on the island as the seamen and waterfront workers have been on strike since 1 January. They continue to receive the support of workers on other islands.

Civil Servants are on a go-slow and the secondary schools are closed as the school children are on strike. The shops remain unopened on the island.



Winston Lennard after he was arrested

...Trinidad

In a two-pronged attack, sugar workers and small cane farmers in Trinidad have occupied the offices of their respective trade unions, physically expelling the trade union bureaucrats. The sugar workers, comprising both cultivation and factory workers, have in the last ten days sent out notices to all their members for a mass meeting to discuss how the struggle now develops. The cane farmers, having formed a new union (the island-wide Cane Farmers' Union) describe the take-over 'as an attempt to force the Government to repeal Act 1 of the Industrial Stabilisation Act 1965 which gives the reactionary Trinidad Island Cane Farmers' Association, led by Norman Gairwar, the monopoly to represent cane farmers in the country'.

The struggle of the sugar workers against their trade union leadership first burst out into the open in 1965 when in large numbers they withdrew from their union, the All Trinidad Sugar Estates and

Factory Workers' Union, and opted for membership in the militant Oilfield Workers' Trade Union. The Government called a state of emergency, sent troops into the sugar belt and subsequently passed the Industrial Stabilisation Act, a section of which tied the workers and cane farmers to their respective unions. Subsequently the Trinidad Government part-nationalised the sugar industry and rewarded both trade union leaders with directorships on the board of Caroni Ltd. - the new sugar monopoly.

Drawing strength from the mass revolt of African workers and unemployed in 1970, the Indian sugar workers renewed their struggle. In May 1973, the sugar workers bypassed their trade union leadership and demanded the expulsion of two members of management. The middle-class owned national newspaper, *The Express*, made this response: 'Such a stipulation differs from the usual kind of employee demand, which always concerns money. In this case no money or improved working conditions are being sought; simply, the dismissal, for that is what it would amount to, of two senior company officials . . . Now, whatever Messrs. Tello and Hunt may or may not have done . . . the hiring and firing of senior executive staff in any company, large or small, in Trinidad and Tobago or elsewhere, is strictly a management prerogative. That is why we wish to remind Mr. Pierre and his colleagues today that, should they submit to this unsubtle form of blackmail their managerial life will not be worth living hereafter. If they give in to this kind of demand, they can bet their bottom dollar that similar demands equally outside the province of the workers will be forthcoming, in the not too distant future.' (9 May 1973)

The workers replied that all relationships within the industry were their province and promptly came out on strike. The Caribbean witnessed for the first time in its history the emergence of the workers' council, the organisation



The Court Marshal handing Raffique Shah the injunction restraining him from entering Tifca House, the union headquarters.

which led the struggle to oust two members of management. In an article, 'The Historical Significance of the Orange Grove Strike', the revolutionary organisation New Beginning describes the event as follows: 'At first, when the Workers Committee began, there was great confusion because it was a new form to them, but over the past ten days they have begun to wield this new form efficiently more and more as it becomes familiar. The Committee is made up of representatives from each section of the industry, cultivation and factory. As a matter of fact, it is the first time in this country that cultivation and factory united in the sugar belt to wage struggle. And it was the cultivation workers, led by a woman, one of the more dynamic persons to emerge in the struggle, that marched into the factory where there were a few reluctant ones and shut the factory down.' (June 1973 issue of *Fortnightly Reports*, New Beginning Movement).

The Workers' Committees are the

organisational bases from which the challenge to the union leadership has been launched. They stated their intention in a document published in June 1973: 'Instead of the union leaders supporting the workers in our fair and just demand for our money, they joined with the company to fight the workers and so we lost all our money . . . We the Sugar Workers' Committee, have come to the inevitable conclusion that Rampartapsingh and Emery (trade union leaders) who are directors and shareholders of the company, together with other executive officers of the union, must go. *THEY ARE THE ENEMIES OF THE WORKERS . . .*'

Meanwhile the small cane farmers, faced with extinction as a class within the industry, were demanding higher prices for their canes. In 1972 they refused to cut their canes unless their demands were met. The union leadership was seen throughout that struggle as being in collaboration with management.

They formed a new union, ICFTU, and called on ex-soldier Raffique Shah to lead them. Sandhurst-trained Shah had been a lieutenant in the Trinidad regiment and led the rebellion of soldiers who refused to support the Government's State of Emergency in 1970. The official Cane Farmers' Union's response to the occupation has been to take out a successful injunction against the organisers of the small farmers (Shah and Winston Lennard) barring them from entering the Union's headquarters. Both have since been arrested and charged for leading the farmers on a demonstration in contravention of the Public Order Act. In a recent visit to London, Shah spoke to *Race Today* about the impending intervention of the Indian sugar workers and farmers into the revolutionary movement in Trinidad and Tobago: 'When we intervene, it spells the end of old colonial society. We are not interested in forming a traditional union as such. Our organisation must have clear political objectives.'



Raffique Shah, Winston Lennard (before their arrest) with sugar workers.

The Guyana Liberation Front replies to Eusi Kwayana's article on 'Burnhamism and Jaganism: The Politics of the Old Order' in the last issue of *Race Today*

Eusi Kwayana, head of ASCRIA, stated that 'in practice, the PPP's development programmes were weighted heavily in favour of Indian interests. It created, with British support, the most massive agricultural settlement ever created in the Caribbean outside of a sugar plantation, namely, Black Bush Empolder. This has turned out to be a formidable base of East Indian agriculture . . .'

Mr. Kwayana tried to make out that the Indians received benefits during 'the seven years of Jagan's rule', and that the

PNC were trying to undo the PPP in order to win support of the Indians.

There can be nothing further from the truth than this statement. The Black Bush scheme was started in 1942 when Dr. Jagan was still in the USA studying dentistry, and he did not arrive in Guyana until 1943. It was not until 1947 that he secured a seat in what was then the Legislative Council. The PPP won the elections in 1953, but they were out of office in three and a half months. It was not until 1957 that his Party were again returned to power. He happened to be Prime Minister when the scheme was completed in 1961, but it is utterly untrue that the PPP created or in any way helped to create the scheme.

Allowances at the scheme were offered not to any particular race group; but the

Negroes were not interested in tilling the soil, and few of them applied. It was the same at all the other land settlement schemes: Anna Regina, Vergenoegen, Cane Grove and elsewhere. At none was distribution made on a racial basis; few Negroes cared to apply, and the allottees became predominantly Indian.

The same thing happened on the sugar plantations. When slavery was abolished in 1834, most of the Negroes who were free left the plantations. In 1838, when apprenticeship came to an end, a steady withdrawal of the Negroes took place. Agricultural work to them carried a taint of slavery, and many of them migrated to the towns and to the nearby villages. At the present time, about 90 per cent of the workers on the sugar plantations are Indians.

REVIEWS

Racism and the Mass Media
Paul Hartmann and Charles Husband
Davis-Poynter, 1974. 280pp. £4.00.

To what extent are people guided in their attitudes and opinions on race by what they see or read in the mass media? What makes a good news story and what affect does it have on the minds of the reader or viewer? How far do the values of the press – conflict, trouble, oppression, violence as useful news sources – coincide with and reinforce those of the wider society? These and a dozen similar questions are fundamental to an understanding of racism and its effects. Hartmann and Husband's book is a significant contribution because for the first time an attempt is made within an academic framework to come to a political understanding of the effects of mass media on white attitudes.

Part of the research involved an extensive survey of press cuttings over the period 1963-70, and a certain cursory glance at TV, radio and films over a similar period. Much of the rest of the work involved an attitude survey amongst schoolchildren in areas of varying 'immigrant' density which was supplemented by a similar survey carried out amongst adults.

Despite its obvious limitations – which stem from the attempt to make psychological theory fit political reality – it's an honest if dull book. The authors rightly refuse to discuss 'race relations' and instead pinpoint racism as the basis of the British 'racial problem'. From two useful introductory chapters comes an explanation of the historic and political roots of white attitudes to black people. From this starting point, we are given an explanation of the interpretative framework within which racial situations are perceived, and in a chapter on 'Race and the British Press' the authors go into a content analysis of news cuttings over

a seven-year period to illustrate what a high news value race has and what the content of its reporting has been. Abroad, there was a tendency to classify material in terms of oppression, injustice and violence, while at home, news was concerned with immigration control, discrimination, conflict and the utterances of Enoch Powell. Much of the respondent's attitudes in the authors' survey was a reflection of this content of the press: when the adults were asked what they could recall reading about black people in the press, crime, riots and trouble were uppermost with political debate centred around Powell making the most impact. There was also the apparent contradiction between a press whose editorial lines were always those of justice and humanity while their news content was based on conflict and violence. Black people to the news desk always appear as a problem or as undesirable: thus the total effect of the news pages run contrary to the apparent editorial liberalism.

But while the work on the press is good and often perceptive, the chapters describing and analysing the attitude survey are often pompous when they are not merely boring. The authors discuss the limitations of psychological theory from an academic rather than political standpoint. Much of which bogs down the book in mystification: relative deprivation reinforced by media may be a source of conflict and hostility, but there is no clear indication of what all the carefully acquired data actually means to the layman.

And there are other significant points that are missed: the influence and effect of radio and television are very inadequately dealt with, relying as the book does on the incestuous relationship between the media for an explanation of the values encompassed in TV or radio programmes. And similarly the section on film is skimpy and makes a number of

generalisations unsupported by examples. We could also have known more about the attitudes and values of reporters, sub-editors and editors.

The concluding chapter is good and it is honest. It notes the crucial contradiction in society between capital and labour and the role of profit as the central dynamic of the social system. It moves on from this to explain racism as creating a perspective on the world which reduces the visibility of injustice and providing a cultural environment in which inequality and repression can continue to serve the interests of capital. From this analysis, which includes a note on the position of black labour at the lowest economic rungs of society, the authors point to the media's twin functions: editorially to preach the gospel of equality and justice while at the same time to put forward the line that the black population are a threat and a problem to the mass of people. And from this apparently radical stance, Hartmann and Husband only marginally allow themselves to be sucked into a blind alley about enlightened self-interest providing the motivation for more committed and accurate searching journalism. They are aware of the role of racism, and the interests of the ownership of the press in maintaining a degree of racial tension. The media do influence attitudes, and they also draw on the attitudes that are prevalent in the society: while government and capital are using the weapons of racism to maintain the system, it is small wonder that the media are a central part of this strategy.

Academically, the book could have provided us with a lot more useful information about the actual functioning of the press and TV and a lot less psychological mystification on a much wider scale. Politically, the book is at last honest, but its commitment nearly gets lost in its 'objectivity'. **D.C.**

LETTERS (cont.)

Not all members were there for the whole of the meeting. When the Chairman, Charley James, for the CCA walked in, Max Farrar walked out; they haven't had a full committee meeting for over six months. But before Charlie James arrived, I had been stuffed up to the eye-balls with Farrar's politics.

The Play Ground leaders' views were that for someone to come in and build a fence and then go away would be bad for the association. I sympathise with him, in that they have been trying to do it for so long and have done nothing, for us to do it would make them look bad. But as far as I'm concerned, it would be people from the community, people of Chapeltown doing something for the community, as well as getting paid for it.

But Max Farrar and his hardly representative committee does not want this. He wants to be in the good books of the

black people of Chapeltown. There is nothing wrong in that. He wants to help the black people of Chapeltown, because they are so incapable they cannot look after themselves.

His desires are for all black youths who are making a conscious attack on the society by refusing to accept the menial jobs which are readily available to them, should continue towards unemployment. He suggests that they should walk the streets, travel light, live rough, run the risk of becoming criminals and being thrown into prison. He wishes that they fight now for their right to exist as a free people. He wants a revolution and he wants it now.

What Max Farrar does not see is the strangled, separate kid, who is wandering, lost and looking for help, trying desperately to figure out where he belongs in a society of rejects.

There is a time for everything and Max Farrar will have his revolution, but

not before George Phillip and Sonny Fearon's people have a precise reason for revolt. It is not enough to say that blacks and the white working class have a common cause. This is simply false. Because for blacks and whites, there can be no common bondage on this earth. But where will Max Farrar be when all the confusion starts? Come the revolution, will Max Farrar be with the black youths he is stirring to action, or will he be somewhere else? We've all heard the saying, 'Blood is thicker than water' and Max Farrar after all is only human. A parasite, a cross between Uriah Heep and Scrooge.

He has made a very frontal, untimely and therefore unfair attack on something nebulous and therefore weak. George Phillips, Agent and Whip Cracker in the Home Office Labour Camp, asks what is Max Farrar afraid of?

Canitz Phillips
7 Reginald Terrace
Leeds LS7 3EZ.

Back Issues

We have a limited number of back copies of "Race Today" which are still available at 15p a copy including postage. Below is a selected list : a fully comprehensive list of titles going back to 1970 is available from our office on receipt of a stamp

1973

January : Whatever Happened to C.A.R.D. ? Racism and Church-Goers.

February : Holland's 'Red Niggers'.

March : Blacks and the British Army.

April : Our E.S.N. Children.Special Report.

May : Racism by Post.

June : The Deportation Business Special Report. Avis Brown : The Colony of the Colonised (Race,sex and class)

July : Single black mothers. Racism and school text-books.

August : Black People and Trades Unions Special Report.

September : Race and Intelligence : Debunking the I.Q. Myth

October/November : Books,Libraries and Racism Special Report.

December : Black People and the Police. Special Report.

1974

January : Race,Sex and Working Class

Power by Selma James

February : The Black Explosion in Schools by Farrukh Dhondy.

March : Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa by Ken Jordaan and The Institute Story: The Unacceptable Face by A. Sivanandan

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PUBLICATIONS

A HISTORY OF INDIANS IN GUYANA by
Dwarka Nath, M.B.E., F.R. Hist. S. Second

revised edition, UK £2.50, USA \$ 6.50 post free. Obtainable from the Author, 30 Crowther Road, South Norwood, London S.E.25.

PERSONAL

PLAYS WANTED

Black writers are asked to submit Plays for the forthcoming World Black and African Festival of Arts & Culture that will take place in November-December 1975 in Lagos. The Works should reflect the Black experience in this country. Prior to the main Festival a production of the selected works will be staged for the UK mini-festival in September-October 1974.

Submit plays to: UKAFT, 46 Kingsway, London W.C.2. Closing date end of May.

HOME TYPING

required by accurate typist: theses, manuscripts, books, etc. No job too small or too large. Contact Mrs. Joan Worrell, 116 Romero Square, Ferrier Estate, Kidbrooke S.E.3., 01-837 0041.

CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the May issue is Tuesday 26 March.

Every Thursday

7 p.m. - 12 p.m.

A dinner and dance at the *Calabash Restaurant*. A three-course meal. Price £2, advance bookings only. Calabash Restaurant, Africa Centre, King Street, W.C.2. Tel. 01-836 1974.

March

10 3 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.

The Setia Uttama Band singing English and Caribbean folk songs. Admission free. At the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High St., London W8 6NQ. Tel. 01-602 3252.

11 7.30 p.m.

A public discussion on *Africa's Rural Youth*. At the Commonwealth Institute,

23 10.30 a.m.

Fight Racism and the IQ Myth in Education, a campaign meeting at the Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish St., London W.1.

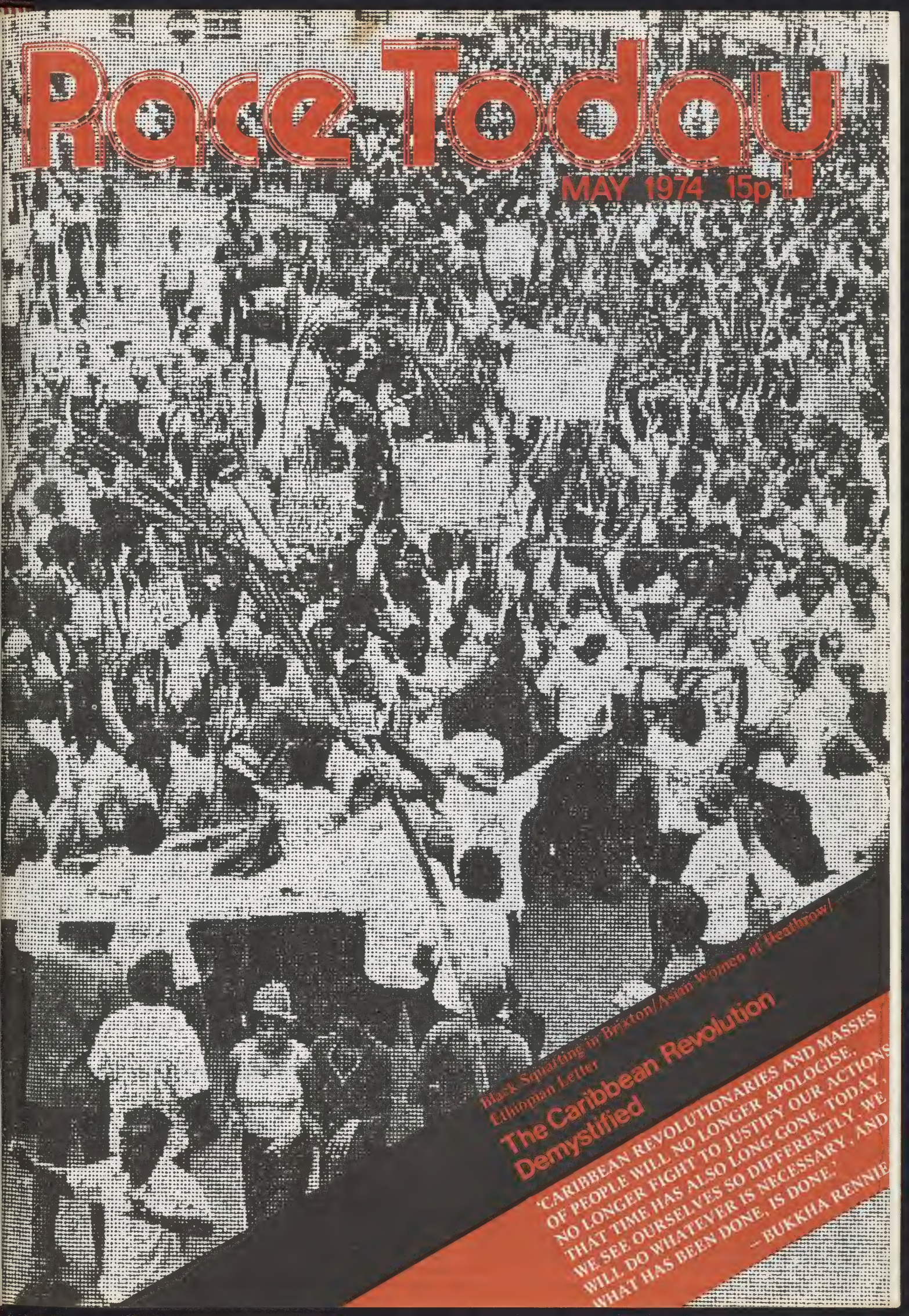
23 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

A one-day conference on Racism and the working-class struggle in South Africa and Britain to be held by the Southern Africa Solidarity Campaign — Sheffield. There will be a discussion on the situations of black workers in South Africa and also in Britain. Ken Jordaan will be speaking on the TUC in South Africa and Asquith Gibb will be speaking on 'Racism and the State'. The programme also includes 'Racism, education and the social services', 'Reports from Workshops', and 'The Sheffield Situation'.

For further information contact Southern Africa Solidarity Campaign — Sheffield, 38 Burngrave Bank, Sheffield S4 7HL.

Race Today

MAY 1974 15p



Black Squatting in Brixton/Asian Women at Heathrow/
Ethiopian Letter

The Caribbean Revolution Demystified

'CARIBBEAN REVOLUTIONARIES AND MASSES
OF PEOPLE WILL NO LONGER APOLOGISE.
NO LONGER FIGHT TO JUSTIFY OUR ACTIONS.
THAT TIME HAS ALSO LONG GONE. TODAY,
WE SEE OURSELVES SO DIFFERENTLY. WE
WILL DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY, AND
WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, IS DONE.'

— BUKKHA RENNIE

LETTERS

St Vincent Young Socialist Group

Comrades,

By chance we came across Vol. 6, no. 3 of your March issue of *Race Today*. The brothers in the above named group are quite impressed with the contents and would like to develop a relationship to receive the magazine on a regular basis.

It is really disheartening to know we are a colony of Britain and yet the liberation movement here which is waging a struggle against British Colonialism does not have any serious contact with movements or individuals in Britain.

Our group is interested in developing and maintaining contact with *Race Today* and any other organisation you can recommend to us. This we see as of vital importance in our opposition to Britain here and for our independence.

We are hoping to hear very soon from you and expect to receive copies of *Race Today*. We would also like to receive all the back issues for 1974. We are trying to plan something big for African Liberation Day in Youldou and the Grenadines. Any information on the situation of African peoples throughout the world will be welcome, along with posters. These should reach us before 26 May.

Young Socialist Group
Kingstown, St. Vincent.

Home Office Labour Camps

Sir,

Canitz Phillips (writing in the April issue of *Race Today*) misses the point of my (unsigned) piece about Community Industry in Chapeltown (in the March issue). By reducing it to my personal views and the Adventure Playground fence, he trivialises the issue. The article had two purposes, neither of them to do with personalities. The first was to give concrete evidence to what many radicals already suspect. The Community Industry Director in Leeds says he has been told by the Home Office to get a project going in Chapeltown because they think there is going to be 'trouble' here. If there's any significance in the joke that they think Chapeltown is near Barnsley, it is that it may modify the 'conspiracy theory': the Home Office community projects are politically motivated, but the Home Office is not the efficient spy network some believe it to be. The other purpose was to emphasise the political significance of the refusal to work by sections of black youth. It is not only *Race Today*

readers who see the implications of refusing the work ethic. The Home Office does too.

The article was not about personalities nor about the Adventure Playground. It was about the Home Office, and it should be discussed on a political level. While I would apologise to Canitz for 'stuffing [him] up to the eye-balls' with my politics, I refuse to discuss the issue in terms of personalities. It would suit the Home Office very well if the political issue was lost in the personal bitchings that emaciate community politics.

My personal politics are of no interest to readers of *Race Today*. Only practice will show whether people like me are, in the last analysis, on the side of black and working class revolutionary forces. Vitriolic letters in *Race Today* prove nothing. They say more about their author than the major — political — issue.

Max Farrar,
80 Harehills Avenue,
Leeds 8.

Padmore on the CP's Betrayal

Sir,

It is ironical that Kay Beauchamp's letter, where she defends the role of the Communist Party in colonial struggles, should appear in the same issue as the supplement on the 6th Pan African Congress, devoted to George Padmore.

Padmore, she must know, had been a member of the Profintern and head of RILU's Negro Bureau. He subsequently broke with the Communists when, in his own words, he had been holding 'a responsible position in the higher councils of the Communist International, which was called upon not only to endorse the new diplomatic policy of the Soviet Government but to put a brake upon the anti-imperialist work of its affiliate sections and thereby sacrifice the young national liberation movements in Asia and Africa. This I considered to be a betrayal of the fundamental interests of my people with which I could not identify myself. I therefore had no choice but to sever my connection with the Communist International.'

Kay Beauchamp must tell us what position the British Communist Party took on that question.

Padmore went on to organise the 5th Pan African Congress and address himself successfully to the anti-colonial movements in Africa.

One could always point to exceptions as Kay Beauchamp so desperately tries to do, but the record of the Stalinists on the colonial question remains for all

to see. The liberation of British colonial territories was achieved in spite of the manoeuvres of the Stalinists.

Tom Strokes
London, N4.

Action not Words

Sir,

Kay Beauchamp says the British labour movement has never treated the struggle of the colonial peoples as foreign.

Granted that our labour movement has always paid lip service to internationalism, has it in fact ever given anything like due attention in its 'deeds, and in all its propaganda, agitation, and practical work' (Lenin) to the demand for equal rights for the peoples of the Commonwealth, especially having in mind the contribution of the Black peoples of our colonies and former colonies to the economic and cultural wealth of this country?

For example, have the organisations Kay Beauchamp names openly, unequivocally, and to any important degree effectively made clear to us here in Britain such rights of the peoples of our colonies and former colonies as:

1. The same right to live and work here as all other Commonwealth citizens, including ourselves?

2. The same standard of living as our own?

3. Reparation for past wrongs (e.g. in Jamaica alone, the slave-owners got £6 million compensation at Emancipation, the slaves not a penny of their arrears of wages).

4. Fair prices for primary products (which would involve our paying more for our tea, coffee, chocolate, rubber, tin, margarine, etc., etc., as well as for our petroleum)?

5. Protection from the multi-national firms and from trades unions, like Max Morris's NUT, that batten on starvation wages and produce-prices in the Black world?

Ken Forge
14 Thornton Rd.
Bromley, Kent.

Notes

Correction

The 'Backlash' letter on p. 122 of the April issue attributed to J.R. Sharkey, was in fact by J.R. Shanley.

Area Round-Up

This feature has again had to be dropped from this month's issue owing to lack of space.

EDITORIAL

Young Lions of Brixton

Sooner or later

But mus'

*The dam going to bus' and every man will break out
and who will stop them?*

The force?

*What force can stop this river of man
who already know their course?*

— Bongo Jerry

As we go to press the West Indian community in South London is in the process of mobilising itself in response to the vicious attack on three of its younger members who were imprisoned at the Old Bailey for assaults on police. Confrontations between the police and the judiciary, on the one hand, and the mass of rebellious West Indian youths, on the other, have dominated the social and political life of the community. Most of these confrontations are closed, private affairs, known only to the immediate participants, where the vast majority of youths are quietly herded into Her Majesty's Borstals. And then there is a sudden eruption in which large numbers of youths confront the police in open battle, bringing to that battle a history of accumulated wrath, and, finding security in numbers, settle old scores and white people become aware of the opposing forces within the British nation, and, in particular, of the strength and power of the black community.

Such an exercise of black community power took the stage at the Brockwell Park fair on 9 June 1973 when 300 West Indian youths confronted 100 policemen in a battle that raged for 45 minutes. Robin Sterling, Lloyd James and Horace Parkinson were selected at random on charges of assault on police and possessing offensive weapons. In one sense they were representing the black community — against their will — at the West Court, Old Bailey, and, of the greatest importance, the black community felt represented by them. So that when Judge Abdela (one-time student at Milton School, Bulawayo, Rhodesia, and Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge; 2nd Lieutenant, Lancashire Fusiliers, Lt. Colonel Commandant, 55 Division Battle School, 7th Battalion Welsh Fusiliers, NW Europe) on behalf of the British State metes out three-year sentences to the sons of West Indian workers, the battle is far from over, merely taken to a higher stage.

In a series of political campaigns against State brutality, the South London community has come to know itself, to be able to sort out from within its ranks the mediators who, in the face of a mortal conflict, seek solutions in every conceivable area except the mass mobilisation of the population. For the first time the school population is involved, having had one of their members — Robin Sterling — sent to prison. For them it is a baptism of fire, but so far they have shown that they have learnt much from the past. At their meetings there is a marked absence of the old guard political opportunist. Their first move has been to call for a mass mobilisation of their community on the streets of Brixton, to be followed by more radical action if necessary. In the last week they have moved with a confidence and self-assurance that bodes well for the future. They have entered on their own terms, discovering their own power and calling on their parents to support radical action.

If there is a cautious response from the older West Indians to the bold and audacious action of the young, it is to be expected. Major transformations do not occur overnight. There are, of course, those who wish to counsel the youths that any bold action would alienate parents. Such advice is political reaction of the worst kind, for it presumes that parents would remain where they are forever. The days ahead contain the possibilities for a unity between the young and the old, but that unity must be on the terms of those who are today under the greatest fire.

Race Today

Volume 6

Number 5

May 1974

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BETWEEN THE LINES

'We are not taking it'

On 14 March three black youths, Horace Parkinson (19), Robin Sterling (15), and Lloyd James (18), were found guilty of eleven charges of affray, assaulting police officers and being in possession of an offensive weapons. They were sentenced to three years each.

The case was heard at the Old Bailey in front of Judge Abdela, and lasted nine days.

All three defendants had attended Brockwell Park fair on 9 June 1973. The fair was at an end when the police were called to a fish and chip shop in Dulwich Road where a stabbing incident had been reported. Three plain clothes policemen, who had been touring the fair, went to the shop and began looking for a young black male. The police claim that a crowd then gathered and began throwing bricks and bottles, resulting in serious injuries to them. Police reinforcements came from all over South London and a battle developed between the police and the youngsters lasting 45 minutes. Parkinson, James and Sterling were the only three arrested.

The defendants all pleaded not guilty and claimed that they were part of the large crowd that gathered and were picked on at random by the police, taken to Brixton police station and severely beaten. Sterling and Parkinson were kept in custody over the weekend and James for a week.



ROBIN STERLING

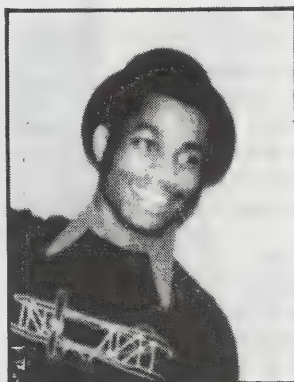
Throughout the trial the police evidence completely conflicted with that of the defence. And although the defence counsel took the line that the police evidence was fabricated, it took the all-white jury under two hours to unanimously find them guilty of all the charges.

Immediately the sentences were heard there was an outcry, in particular from the 'liberal' press and social and community workers in the area. They all high-

lighted the fact that Sterling and Parkinson were of 'good' character, that Sterling was only 15, that the sentences were savage and that an injustice had been done that would upset the 'harmonious' atmosphere of Brixton.

'It is a great tragedy as far as Horace is concerned, because he has worked hard and comes from a respectable home' (social worker).

'Sterling was in many ways an outstanding pupil at Tulse Hill Comprehensive School. His family background was, unlike that of many boys, stable and helpful. The boy desperately wanted to do well academically. He took an active part in the life of the school, distinguished himself as a cross country runner and was a member of several of the school societies' (*South London Press, Editorial, 22 March*).



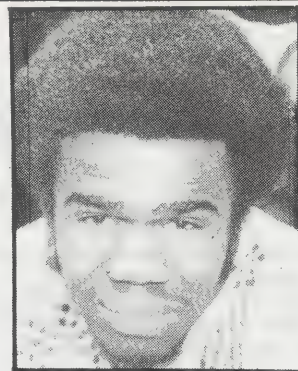
LLOYD JAMES

Lloyd James, who has previous convictions, failed to get a mention.

Within a few days, Judge Abdela called Robin Sterling back to review his sentence and agreed to hear a plea of mitigation from Rudy Narayan, Courtney Laws, of the Brixton Neighbourhood Community Association, and Chief Inspector Owen Kelly, Community Liaison Officer for Brixton. Laws and Kelly both stressed the fact that the harsh sentence imposed would increase tensions in Brixton after a period of relative calm. Narayan asked the Judge to 'reach out into the hearts and minds of the people of Brixton - regardless of race or colour. . . Rather than have Sterling behind walls sewing mail bags, let him slog away at making Brixton a better place to live in, in the field of police-community relations.'

On Wednesday, 20 March, a meeting of the boys' parents and social and community workers in Brixton was held in the town hall. It was agreed that an appeal against the sentences was the first step and that all efforts should be put into financing and organising this.

sharply focused, ever more strongly directed by black and white extremist groups. The evidence they have to present to the young West Indian is weighty and all about him. See here they will say, how social deprivation and blackness go hand in hand. Look at your housing situation, look at your employ-



HORACE PARKINSON

Rudy Narayan announced that it was intended to employ two QCs for the task. Cliff Lynch, local community activist, called for letters of protest to be written to the Home Secretary, protesting against the savage sentences.

On Wednesday, 27 March, the school population intervened. A meeting of 70 schoolchildren, called by the Tulse Hill Students' Collective, took place. The schoolchildren, ranging from 9 - 17 years, and from different schools in South London, were in a militant mood. The chairman of the meeting, outlining what had happened at Brockwell Park, pointed out that the police had escalated the situation into one of confrontation. The fair was being continually patrolled by plain clothes policemen. He called on the black community to let the police know that 'we will not stand by and see these brothers go down'. Tulse Hill Students' Collective had already raised £100 for the appeal in their own school and the chairman called on all the schoolchildren present to organise in their own schools, not only to raise money but to make sure that a continuous campaign is kept up on behalf of the boys.

The meeting also agreed to mobilise as many people as possible for a demonstration planned for 30 March, which is to go from Brockwell Park through Brixton. A schoolgirl supported the call for continued demonstrations, as had been held for other court cases. Another said that the same thing had happened in 1972 at Peckham Rye fair and that the community had to show the police that 'we are not taking it'.

The meeting agreed that a continued campaign should be waged on behalf of the boys - especially amongst youths in school - and no distinction between the three should be made. 'Robin Sterling might be the youngest', said one schoolgirl, 'and in the papers all you read about is him, but all three have been wrongly convicted - not just him.'

ment situation.'

When the population starts to fight back against repression, when social change thrusts itself brashly onto the political agenda, then the ideology of the ruling class must change too. Otherwise it will go under. As the theory of power and its maintenance changes to deal with a new

John Brown and Old Bill

'As more and more poorly qualified young West Indians come on to the labour market, so more and more resentment will develop and extend to be ever more

political situation, so must its strategy and tactics. To deal with the struggles of the 70s with the tools of the 60s is not good enough.

John Brown is the Warden of the Language and Social Studies Department of Cranfield Institute of Technology, an advanced management college in Bedford where the skills of social scientists are put to work on the problems of managing a society in conflict. He spent the late fifties and early sixties as a staff tutor at the University of the West Indies, then returned to work at Cranfield on a study of immigrants in Bedford which was published as a book called *The Unmelting Pot*. He also spent time lecturing at the Police College, and for the last five years has been interested in the relationship of black people with the police.

Much of his research has now been distilled into a 70-page handbook entitled *A Theory of Police Immigrant Relationships* (which is a grand title for a mish-mash of bits and pieces). Brown is concerned to develop a more effective system of social control: he recognises the constant conflict which is the reality of the situation, but he speaks with the voice of the oppressor. He introduces his pamphlet with a look at a number of 'local and national factors' determining police-immigrant relations by sketching in the background to the immigration of the 50s and 60s. He recognises that black labour was imported to do jobs that white workers were refusing to do and talks about their underprivileged background without a mention of the colonial framework except a passing reference to slavery. 'They have tended to become a new proletariat', he writes in an original contribution to political philosophy.

Within the first 1,000 words, his obsession becomes clear. He recognises the emergence of new social forces and points to the work of the unnamed 'extremists' who 'sharply focus' the resentment felt by black youth, or make the problems of deprivation and race into 'extremist propaganda one'. The stage is set for a theory of Police-immigrant relationships would be better for a few marginal adjustments in police practice, the drafting of social workers who will put in longer hours and fewer criticisms and a more enlightened policy from industry on the social conditions of black workers.

'The extremists are against dispersal', he tells us because 'their power and influence depend on preserving concentrations of deprivation and discontent.' He manages a whole chapter on 'Political Racial Extremist Groups' without once mentioning the activities of the right-wing groups. Dealing with Brixton he ignores the spate of bombings that broke out while he was there, and prefers to stay close to the police, dealing only with black people at second or third remove through the middle class leadership of youth clubs and community groups. He tells us nothing of the political philosophy of these unnamed extremists, preferring the mythology that they 'use police-immigrant relationships further to harden attitudes and to bolster support for black extremists in ways which allow them to

challenge local moderate West Indian leadership'.

Yet, while he tells us that the police acknowledge the mishandling of the eviction of Railton Road squatters, he has nothing to say of the case of Linton Johnson, Joshua Francis or even Henry Chin. Instead he tells us the police must watch the way they handle 'commonplace incidents' such as 'the eviction of squatters, the activities of political and racial militants' — his only two examples reflecting accurately the reality of day-to-day struggle.

With the Asian community, he feels that the problems are different. He has access, too, to information that the Home Office would dearly like to have. 'Illegal immigrants are more numerous than either British or immigrant leaders care to admit' he claims, with no supporting evidence. The main 'problems' that bother him are allegations of corruption, the hint of drugs, the possibility of illegal immigration. Apparently his year of research left him with no knowledge of the mass raids on Asian homes, the deportations and passport searches. He makes no acknowledgement of the climate of fear as a weapon of the police. Some things are better left unsaid.

The pamphlet is important because it is the sort of document that informs the new tactics of social control: Mr. Brown has an inside knowledge of the situation, and he cares about society's stability. He sees conflict and rebellion and wants to cure or control it by being reasonable. He uses the tools of his trade to identify the forces of change and suggest how to defuse them. It will become a policeman's pocket book, a standard text at Bramhill. It takes up much of the work of Michael Banton and popularises it for the average constable. It lacks the profundity of a Kitson, but it will have the same impact.

'71 Act Stays

Roy Jenkins, the new Home Secretary, made it clear in the House of Commons on the 28 March that there will be no significant easing of the 1971 Immigration Act, let alone the full-scale overthrow that he used to talk about when in opposition. He did promise some administrative tinkering with the Act to make it appear more humane in practice, but there will be no change in the sexist regulations which keep out the husbands and fiancées of women who are British citizens. Neither will there be any change in the status of overstayers, nor any reversal of the retrospective provisions of the Act which have led to the recent outburst of passport checking and dawn raids.

After the Act was finally passed and its retrospective sections ratified by the House of Lords in June 1973, the thought and activity which had gone on in the black community coalesced into the demonstration held on July 22. After that, most of the impetus went out of the movement and the apparent unity around

the call to repeal the Act faded away.

The Indian Workers' Association called a meeting in Southall on Sunday March 17 to try and rebuild the momentum against the Act. It was sparsely attended by a largely Asian audience from Ealing and London. Much of the discussion was at a low and conservative level. Industrial action and a demonstration were both ruled out. A number of resolutions were eventually agreed upon, expressing opposition to the 1971 Act, and calling for its repeal. They also noted their appreciation of the TUC for condemning the Act, but added that in many struggles of black workers, the trade union movement acted slowly and rarely declared a strike official.

The motions were passed, and the conference faded away. There was little energy, and little feeling of urgency or commitment.

The Labour Government now contains some remarkably forthright spokespeople on the iniquities of the 1971 Act:

Roy Jenkins "This is a highly objectionable Bill. It is misconceived in principle and damaging in practice.

"It is liable to make not merely every new coloured immigrant or every existing coloured immigrant, but also every coloured person born in this country feel less secure, less wanted and less belonging, thus inevitably exacerbating community relations.

"If the government had any self-respect, they would withdraw the Bill and start again."

(House of Commons 8/3/71)

Shirley Williams MP Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection. "Britain's immigration rules declare in effect that women are chattels - where they live and move, whether they are deported, all depend on the domicile of their husbands."

(House of Commons 21/2/73)

Peter Shore MP Secretary of State for Trade and Industry "Restrictions on access to work and for dependants are very clearly discriminatory."

(House of Commons 21/2/73)

Joan Lestor MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said in an interview on the radio on 3 May 1973 that the 'retrospective element of the Act is appalling. It means that people will spend their whole lives in fear'.

John Fraser MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Employment. Pointed out during the debate on the Pakistan Bill: 'We are in danger of doing a repeat performance of the 1971 Act. We cannot tolerate people being changed in status from one Bill to another.'

(House of Commons 10/7/73)

All these spokesmen are now members of the government, and many of them were in office when Labour passed the 1968 Act. What can be expected of this Government remains to be seen, but Roy Jenkins is off to an inauspicious start.

Asian Workers and the I.R.A.

'Accordingly, all these applications fail and are dismissed. We would only add that in our view the applicants were fortunate to have obtained salary in lieu of notice and accrued holiday payments: they could scarcely have complained if they had all been summarily dismissed.'

After four months of strike, the workers at Perivale Gutterman (the Middlesex textile firm which locked out its Asian workforce) have been delivered a crushing blow by the Industrial Tribunal. With the lofty finality of a Victorian landlord, the Tribunal has sifted the evidence, weighed all the considerations, objectively analysed the situation and kicked the men firmly in the teeth.

'We wanted to stick it out to the bitter end,' said one of the strike committee. 'Now we just want to give up and run away. Where can you go if you try everything and nothing works?'

The final lock-out occurred on 4 December after months of struggle inside the firm to establish a bonus system that was both easily understandable and fair to all. The firm employed 300 people: on the production side 85 per cent of the workers joined the T&GWU after they had put the firm back on its feet following a fire. Nearly all of them were Asian, and some had been with the firm for ten years or more. The T&GWU called the strike an official lock-out, and on 17 December, the shop-stewards and Frank Cosgrove, the local full-timer, went up to the London Regional office in Finsbury Park to discuss with the Regional Secretary how to handle the dispute.

It was at this meeting that the policy of going to the Industrial Tribunal was put up. The T&G has in the past taken a firm stand of non-collaboration with the machinery of the Industrial Relations Act. After the Pentonville Five case, and the mass mobilisation that surrounded it, the T&G took a policy of limited collaboration with the Act — attending Tribunals when called, but never using them.

The Tribunal is part of the machinery of the State: it grew out of the 1965 Industrial Training Levy, to become part of the apparatus of the I.R.A. An appeal to the National Industrial Relations Court is possible if the Tribunals turn down an applicant's case. The Tribunal meets in public, but its deliberations are private. The findings too are made public. It is chaired by a barrister and consists of 'worthy citizens' who can be relied on to turn in a safe verdict.

The T&G decided to file a case at the Tribunal, despite an official policy of not doing so, at the suggestion of Regional Officers Bert Fry and Fred Ferryman. Previous T&G cases — like the struggle over Midland Cold Storage and the Vestey docks empire — have relied on the strength of working class power rather than the use of State machinery.

The Asian workers went along with the regional officers' decisions: they filed an application at the Tribunal on

27 December. Despite pressure on the local organiser from the men, no support was forthcoming from other sections of the T&GWU, no strike pay came from the union, and no social security benefit was paid out to them. The Christmas holiday, New Year, and the three-day week confused the issue, but the men turned down an occupation of the factory proposed by some of the younger ones.

The firm received the summons from the Tribunal, and successfully applied for a stay of enquiry. Eventually the Tribunal met on 18 February — ten weeks after the original strike decision had been made. In the meantime the firm had been carrying on production virtually unharmed. The Department of Employment sent down scab labour and maintenance workers and office staff operated the machines. Business turned over much as before as drivers and workers regularly



On The Picket Line : Four Wintry Months. crossed the 'official picket line'. The men, on the other hand, only started to get strike pay in mid-February and their resources from the Asian community were minimal.

The Tribunal swung into business with a hatchet. Out of 59 workers who applied, they immediately dismissed 22 applications because they had not been in the union long enough. Like Ken Norton's meeting with George Foreman, it was hardly worth them going in the first place.

Then the Tribunal heard from the men and the management. Perivale Gutterman were very reasonable, thought the worthy citizens. When new agreements were needed they got to work on them immediately. When the workers' go-slow forced production down to 25 per cent (claimed the firm) that was intolerable. When the men sent back agreements because management had gone back on their word, then the men were chiefly evasive, wouldn't speak up in good English and were obviously lying. And so it went on. Four days of hearings, with the men desperately hunting for witnesses because they thought the union had been going to provide them with a solicitor. Four days, during which management had presented some remarkable documents and the men had seemed ill-organised and disturbed at the procedure of justice.

Yet even after the hearings, the men still thought they would win. Walking through Southall a week before the decision, Aslam Khan, the chief shop steward, had confidently told a friend he was sure they would soon be back at work.

On 25 March, three and a half months

after the strike had started, three months after the original application, the Tribunal pronounced its verdict with true crushing solemnity — 'The unanimous decision of the Tribunal is that all the applications fail and are accordingly dismissed.'

The men were appalled — 'It's a dreadful thing,' said Mukhta Sandhu, one of the stewards. 'That court is only made to protect the employers, not the employees. We didn't even take a vote to go there.'

Now the men are to meet again to decide further action, but questions need to be asked in this struggle.

First. What was the union Regional Office doing going to Industrial Tribunal when it was against official policy? Why was the procedure not made clear to the men (especially the 22) once the decision had been made?

Second. Why did strike pay take so long in coming through? What stopped the union from mobilising serious support for the struggle in other sections of its organisation like the docks and the drivers?

Third. How seriously did the Asian community support the strike? Did the IWA (Southall) really throw itself into organising support and flexing its muscles on the workers' behalf? Or was it just a half-hearted attempt?

These are serious questions and the dispute and its handling demands answers. Three and a half freezing months, unpaid on a picket line is a tough place to learn political lessons. But already some of the men are talking of working in other factories and organising unions there. 'And next time,' they say, 'we will do it properly and occupy.'

RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS

" VOICES OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD "

A book of poems by Linton Kwesi Johnson. *Voices* was first performed at the Keskids Centre in June 1973. *Youths of Hope* and *Five Nights of Bleeding* have appeared in earlier issues of this magazine.

Priced at 50p, copies are obtainable at a few bookshops or direct from Towards Racial Justice, 184 King's Cross Road, London, WC1.

" RACE AND RESISTANCE: The Institute of Race Relations Story " by A. Sivanandan.

The Institute is threatened with closure. This pamphlet explains why. It relates the IRR to the imperial history that spawned it and shows how when the staff began to attack racism and vested interest, and develop new perspectives and functions, it lost its traditional financial backing.

30p per copy.

Movement House Raided

At six o'clock in the morning of Thursday, 28 March, 25 police officers broke down the door of the North London premises of the Caribbean Solidarity Movement. The house in Finsbury Park had been under police observation for some weeks and the raid was carried out under a warrant issued under the 1968 Firearms and Explosives Act. This is an Act which gives the officers unlimited powers to search, and the bold 25 used it liberally. They searched the whole house, the garage, the rear yard. They went through dirty clothes, looked under mattresses, pulled up the carpets.

They didn't find any arms or explosives, but they did have a good look through the files and correspondence of the Movement. They noted down interesting and useful addresses in their notebooks — mainly of British activists rather than Caribbean contacts.

The six people who live in the house were all searched, despite the undressed and sleepy state of most of them. Althea Lecointe, whose sister, Beverley Jones, was recently killed by Trinidad police, and her husband Eddy, came in for special attention. The police finally took away a student, Julian, who was living in a downstairs room. They held him at the police station for two and a half hours while checking his passport and immigration status.

The warrant to search the home was

issued on 9 March, a Saturday. Apparently the police felt the situation urgent and dangerous enough to find themselves a Saturday magistrate to sign it for them. They then waited for 19 days before launching their search. Nothing incriminating was found, but a few more names and addresses have undoubtedly found their way into the Tintagel House computer.

Eddy and Althea have made a full report of the incident to the National Council for Civil Liberties. They are also demanding of Sir Robert Mark that he fixes the front door back on again.

New Moves, Old Demands

The situation in Ethiopia is constantly changing. The 'Ethiopian Letter' (on p. 155) outlines February's revolt and the background to it. Below we record more recent developments.

On 27 March, after only a month in Office, new Prime Minister Endalkachew has offered to resign because he is 'disturbed and frustrated' by recent 'dissident' actions which are 'hampering' his government in its tasks. This is in response to renewed activity among junior officers and men in the Armed Forces against the regime. The 2nd Army Division regained control of Asmara (capital of Eritrea and the second largest city in the country). Acting jointly with the police they took over the airport, set up road blocks on all the approaches to the city, and arrested

the Commanding Officer, the Chief of Police and other senior officers. On 27 March, they sent a delegation to Addis Ababa with new demands. These included their earlier demands for major reforms and for the arrest and trial of former ministers and officials and, in addition, they stated that no action be taken against military personnel involved in February's revolt — this last in response to the recent arrests of some junior officers in Addis Ababa, the capital.

Even at the army headquarters in Addis Ababa, where senior officers and supporters of the government are still in control, there are signs of dissatisfaction. On 26 March a statement, claiming to come from the HQ, put out over the state-owned radio and television networks, said that they supported the government as long as it was prepared to carry out earlier promises of reform. But Endalkachew's government has not acted on any of these. Land reform, the most fundamental issue, has not been mentioned; the membership of the Constitutional Conference (set up to recommend reforms) is made up of well-known reactionary land owners; and in the capital, the arrest of opponents and leaders of the revolt, both within the military and the civilian population, has begun.

The new government was clearly consolidating its power not as a reformist body but along the lines of its predecessor. The junior officers in the north who have been at the head of the revolt, did not wait for their own arrests, but responded by reoccupying Asmara and reactivating the struggle of the popular forces.

DOCK BRIEF

Police Obstruct

Two Jamaicans, Henry Barnes and Hugh Francis, charged with obstructing the police in the execution of their duty, appeared at Tottenham Magistrate's Court on 12 February 1974. The charges arose from an incident which occurred on 24 January 1974. The defendants went to a fish and chip shop in Tottenham at about 11.15 p.m. As they left the shop they noticed a group of seven black youths, 18-20 years old, walking on the pavement on the opposite side of the road.

They then saw a police car pull up behind the group and two police officers get out from the vehicle. One of the officers (later identified as Y253) started to push one of the boys in the direction in which he was already walking. Two of the boys who left the crowd and started to walk in the opposite direction to the rest of the group were pushed back by the same police officer and forced to go in their original direction. During this time the other officer simply stood by the police car with his hands in his pockets — taking very little interest in what was

going on. Then Constable Y253 grabbed one of the boys in the group and, holding him around the neck, dragged him first against a wall, then back towards the police car, and arrested him.

At this point Barnes and Francis crossed the road and Barnes said to the boy who was being held by the officer: 'Look, don't give them any aggro, I saw what happened and I will take their numbers and act as a witness.' He then took down the number of Constable Y253. Francis also made similar remarks to the boy, advising him not to give the police any trouble. Francis and Barnes then turned away and walked back across the road towards the fish and chip shop. As they reached the centre of the road, a police van and a police car arrived and more policemen jumped out. They noticed a police sergeant going towards the group of boys and Francis asked whether he was in charge — he said he was. They then told him what had happened, but they claim he showed no interest. Because of this Barnes said to Francis: 'I must take his number so I can act as a witness.' The sergeant overheard this, came up to him and pulled him aside as if he wanted to talk to him, but then turned towards the police van and directed him into it.

Barnes shouted to Francis: 'Witness this.' As he called out to Francis, the sergeant called to another officer: 'Grab him,' and Francis was also put into the van.

The police case was that the two defendants objected to them arresting one of the youths and held on to him telling him not to go with the police. Because of their behaviour the group of coloured youths became very hostile, and they arrested the men for obstructing the police in the execution of their duty. By the time the fourth police witness was giving his evidence, the magistrate stopped the case and dismissed all charges against the defendants.

In the March 1974 issue of *Race Today* we published the case of Richard Emmanuel, a 21-year-old Jamaican, who was charged with robbery.

He was arrested three months after the incident and pleaded not guilty to the charge. The jury failed to reach agreement and a re-trial was ordered.

At the Old Bailey on the 22 January the case was re-heard under Judge Gittins. The jury took fifteen minutes to find Emmanuel not guilty.

Starvation Code

Ruth First writes:

In South Africa the Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on the African wages paid by British firms in that country has been dismissed as a damp squib. That's a pretty revealing judgment of proceedings which ended by proposing an ethical code of conduct for British business profiting from apartheid, but which stopped short of practically everything else.

From the outset, of course, the terms of reference of the Committee



Anti-Apartheid News

dictated its conclusions. The spread effects of the extraordinarily deep and close involvement of British capital in the South African economy — valued these days at a good £2,000 million and involving half the top 100 British companies as well as many others — were out of bounds. The resulting collective responsibility of British business, and trade, was not questioned. That presence was taken as given, and for granted.

But since it is in a company's 'wider' interest to maintain 'a good reputation' — a characteristically business calculation — the Select Committee ticked off those firms which on their own evidence were demonstrated to be paying wages below the starvation line. (Note, incidentally, that wage levels are gauged by sociologists' standards, and African workers' demands are ignored or treated as non-existent.)

What to do with the obvious miscreants? The Committee proposes that the Department of Trade and Industry and the Pretoria-based British Embassy should act as watch-dog. It is all rather vague. If firms fail to measure up to the prescribed employment standards, then, according to the Committee, there should be tougher measures. These are not stipulated. There have been suggestions of legislation that would require firms to comply with the Code. This we have still to see, but it is difficult to contemplate how such control could be made workable — short of questioning the right of private capital to make its own investment and management decisions. And this the Select Committee refused to do in the first instance, which explains why findings are so irrelevant to the big issues in the British-South African connection.

British capital has gone to South Africa because it is highly profitable to do so. The profits accrue from that system of labour exploitation known

as apartheid. Misery wages are only part of that system, and limiting scrutiny to the rates paid industrial workers obscures the fact that apartheid is a highly integrated system of super-exploitation whereby a capitalist state ensures a supply of cheap industrial labour by undermining the productive capacity of African economies in the reserves or so-called Bantustans, and appropriating the products of that rural reserve of labour to subsidise below-survival wages in industry.

In other words you cannot separate starvation wage levels from land hunger, and from migrant, forced and cheap labour, and these from the machinery

of labour control and political terror. Tinkering with employment practice in some factories will make virtually no impact on the total system of super-exploitation. On the contrary, manipulation of the wage structure alone, without assaulting the foundations of the cheap labour economy, might well speed the process towards greater capital intensity in certain spheres of industry, and enhance the capacity of the system to dispense with larger supplies of African labour and thus to deepen the rural impoverishment which is the other side of industrial workers' sub-standards.

Meanwhile, limited and partial reform measures will be used to legitimate Britain's continued presence in the South African economy, and British capital will continue to help fuel the engines of apartheid.

IQ Campaign

The Campaign on Racism, IQ and the Class Society, set up in response to the resurgence in scientific racism, held a conference in London on 23 March. It was attended by 250 people (mainly students, teachers and psychologists).

In the morning session the racist theories of Arthur Jensen, Richard Herrnstein, William Shockley and Hans Eysenck (the most notorious protagonists) were attacked. Even in their own terms their theory, that intelligence can be measured by IQ tests, that different groups get different average scores on the tests and that intelligence is predominantly a matter of heredity, not environment, was demolished. But the scientific aspect is not the main thrust of the Campaign's argument. The theories are applied in practice and must be dealt with in the context of the system that employs them. It is no coincidence that the pseudo-

scientific assertion that the white middle class comes top and the black working class bottom in the IQ scale reflects the reality of capital's social hierarchy. Nor is it a coincidence that as the black and white working class increase their attacks on the system that oppresses them, capital should revive 'objective' science to defend its position and justify its actions.

In the afternoon session workshops (on the ideology of IQ, the class nature of the education system, genetic and racial myths) provided more detailed information and ammunition for people to combat racism in their place of work. But, when it came to an ongoing campaign, the conference did not sufficiently clarify its aims and perspectives and a general rhetoric against capitalism and for revolution tended to take the place of any detailed plan of action.

In the USA a campaign of a similar nature has been launched. In October 1973, 'A Resolution Against Racism', a full-page ad appeared in the *New York Times*. Signed by more than 2,000 university people, it demanded that 'the use of the academy to further racial oppression must be halted', and announced the National Campaign Against Racism to expose and fight racist theories, research, teaching and practices on the campuses. There are now local chapters throughout the USA. At New York's Staten Island Community College members successfully disrupted a meeting preventing Shockley from expounding his views. At Princeton members planning to stop a similar 'debate' counteracted cries of 'academic freedom' with the following statement: 'Academic freedom can only have validity in a society where all people are equal participants and when it is not being used to deny the humanity and threaten the existence of any member of society.'

Again this is no theory. In the USA, scientific racism has been used to justify segregation and cuts in expenditure on compensatory education — for, the rationale goes, if people are born stupid, there's no point in wasting money on improving their environment or schooling. More than this there are also birth control schemes (to stop 'inferior' people from reproducing) and Shockley has proposed cash inducements for sterilisation (\$ 1,000 for every IQ point below 100). An Alabama hospital took up his idea — Alice and Minnie Relf, two black teenagers have recently been involuntarily sterilised, although they're not asking for any bonus but are suing for \$ 1 million.



For further information, contact Campaign on Racism, IQ and the Class Society, c/o BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, London W.1.

NEWS BACKGROUND

Low Pay, Long Hours, And a Small Flame Of Rebellion

Asian women provide a significant reserve of cheap labour-power. Many of them are employed on the lowest rungs of the economic ladder in menial, underpaid tasks in factories and the service industries. The contract cleaning industry is a jungle of price cutting, low pay and appalling conditions. *Race Today* investigates the situation of the women employed as cleaners at Heathrow Airport, London.

'British Airways announce the departure of their flight to New York. Will passengers holding a boarding card please assemble with their hand luggage at the check-in point . . . Air India wish to announce the arrival of their flight from Calcutta . . . Here is an important announcement from Air France. Will passengers for Paris please wait for a routine check in the Departure Lounge . . . El Al announce their 11.00 hours flight to Tel Aviv.'

Heathrow Airport on a typical Tuesday morning. Americans on vacation, in plaid jackets and toning trousers wait eagerly with African businessmen and Argentinian diplomats. A German student, hair flowing and rucksack bulging, shares a plastic sofa with a dignified lady from Thailand. Girls from Hertz and Avis, all eyelash and hemline, compete for attention with air hostesses and secretaries accompanying accountants and agents from Honolulu and Holland. Porters amble with trolleys of luggage for Panama and Portugal while ticket checkers and counter clerks attend to the day-to-day business of international pandemonium.

Everyone is going somewhere or coming back from somewhere else. Those who aren't travelling are busy being busy. Everyone is important, everyone has a job to do, a place to be.

Unnoticed by the crowd, a woman quietly goes about her business. She pushes a long-handled mop along the tiled floor. She is older than most of the travellers, she looks tired and grey. Her hair is wrapped in a thin scarf and a bluish-pink nylon overall covers a blouse buttoned to the throat and shawls to the ankle. As she pushes her mop along, she empties each of the waste-paper baskets. Peter Stuyvesant packets follow Rothman's King Size wrappers into her polythene

bag. She puts the bag back on her trolley and continues her work. She doesn't seem to notice what's going on around her. She is in another world.

Another Day's Work

The airport is a city of 60,000 workers, employed in every imaginable trade and grade to keep the world's travellers moving, the world's airlines healthily in profit. For many of the workers here, wages are high and perks are many, defended by firm, militant unions who know their power and use it. Loaders and luggage-handlers, porters and policemen, engineers and enquiry-clerks all have their wages and sweeteners to make the job worthwhile.

At the very bottom of this ant-heap of activity are the cleaners who work on the three passenger Terminals. The Terminals are situated in the middle of the concrete island that is Heathrow Central. Isolated from reality by miles of runway, the cleaners do the physical work of sweeping, brushing, polishing and dusting. They clean up the sick child's vomit and the droppings from the Duty Free shop. Unseen and unsung, they work in two gangs of fifteen to a terminal, working shift and shift-about. The women on the early gang catch a company bus at 5.15 am in Southall, for which they have to pay their own fares. By 6 o'clock they have started work, and, except for an (unpaid) meal-break, they will stay at it until 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Then they'll leave, to be replaced by the other shift who will work until 10 in the evening. All of them are Asian.

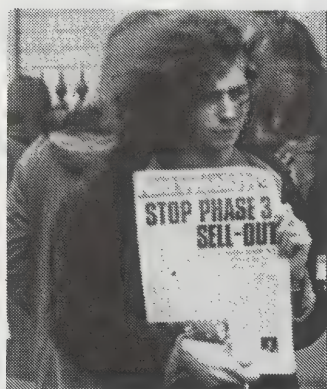
For this work, the women receive the princely sum, negotiated for them by the

Transport and General Worker's Union and the General and Municipal Workers' Union, of 38p an hour. To make up something resembling a living wage, most of the women put in a six- or seven-day week. For a six-day week, they might make £15.50; for a seven-day week, perhaps £19.40. If they're really lucky, work hard and keep their noses clean, there is a minute chance they might be promoted to clean up the toilet. Here the wages are slightly better, and they have a chance of tips. Those jobs are much sought after and done mainly by the white women. But they do say you'll get one eventually if you stay long enough.

Most of the women are middle-aged and older. They are too old to get work in a factory, and for most of them it is their first and only experience of going out to work. They cannot speak English and they remain locked into their continued exploitation by their inability to communicate beyond their own group. Mrs. A is typical. Five years ago, she was working on a small farm in the Punjab: she had never gone out to work in her life in India and instead she worked as a housewife, field-hand and domestic slave in the rigid political organisation that is the Indian family. She fetched and carried, laboured and loved at the centre of her family for 50 years before she came to England to join her son. Illiterate and unable to speak a word of English, she lived at first in Bedford where her husband worked in the brick fields.

Later she moved to Southall with her husband. At first he worked in a factory and she stayed at home. She was homesick for India, lonely and bored, when she heard from a friend about a job at the airport. The firm was pleased to have her, and despite her husband's preliminary

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doubts, his own ill-health forced the issue. When she first started going to work she was worried about the children at home, tired out from the labour in the job and she hated it. Gradually, she got used to the rhythms of work, learned the tricks of the trade, made friends among the other Punjabi women on the terminal and for the first time in her life took home a wage packet at the end of the week.

The contract to clean the Airport Terminals was put out after competitive tender to Acme Industrial Cleaners Ltd. The British Airports Authority is actually responsible for keeping the airport clean and it was the Authority who accepted the tender from Acme Cleaners. They don't see it as any part of their job to check on the wages and conditions of employees of groups they give contracts to. Once the job is put out, they wash their hands of it.

Mrs. A works on a shift that is entirely Asian women, all of whom earn the same small amounts — last week she took home £14.00 for herself and her sick husband. Her supervisor is white, her manager is white and her immediate over-seer is white too — although Mrs. A insists that she's a fine woman who never harms the cleaners. The manager is something else. He sacks the women — she recalls a woman who was sacked for refusing to do two people's jobs. And although the women are in a union, she says the T&GWU never does anything for them. They occasionally talk among themselves about the possibility of fighting back: but for most of them, it is just not a present possibility. Many of them are contributing to the family budget here in England, and back home. There are children to support, and obligations to fulfill. Many of them see little chance of fighting back — they feel themselves to be too old to get jobs in a factory

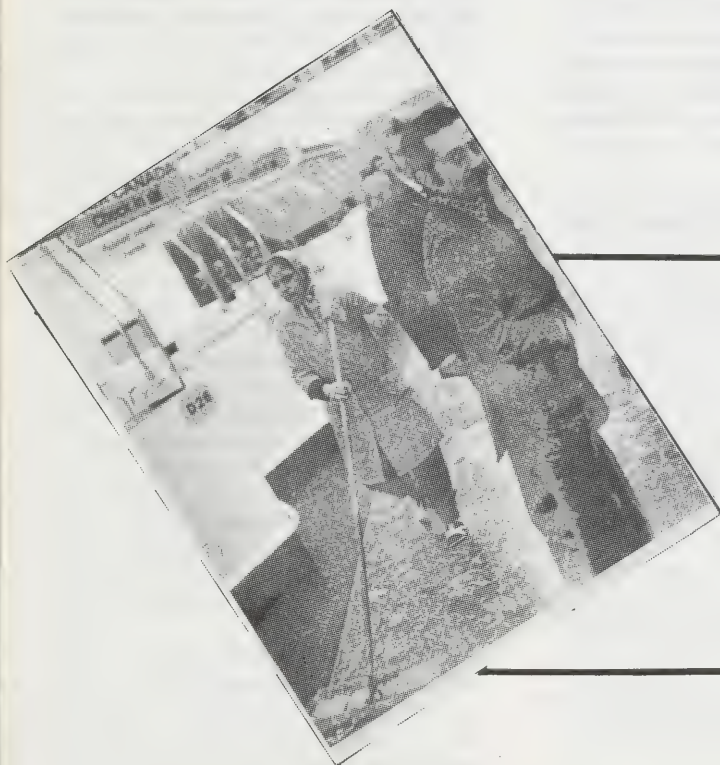
now. Some of them have already tried to get work in other places in West London, only to be turned down flatly and finally.

Above all else, the lack of English hampers them so much, they feel it's essential to gain some fluency. Accordingly, a number of them struggle with English classes every week and a slight but steady grasp is coming.

The Company

Acme Industrial Cleaners is a subsidiary of Allied Industrial Cleaners Ltd., which is itself part of the giant Pritchard Services Group. Acme was set up in 1946 as a general cleaning service and it grew over the years until in November 1967 the then chairman, Donald Pearce, sold it to Allied in return for shares and a seat on the board. Both companies are part of Pritchards, which also controls twenty other companies in the cleaning industry. Pritchards is the largest cleaning company in Britain with over 19,000 employees and a pre-tax profit in 1972 of more than £1.2m. In addition to its work for the British Airports Authority at Heathrow and Gatwick, it also does work for the Department of the Environment through its subsidiary London Stone Cleaning Company (who clean many of the old building in the City), and similar companies in the Midlands, the North and Scotland. It also works for local hospital boards and the Department of Health and Social Security through its subsidiary, Hospital Cleaning.

In addition to its business in the cleaning industry, Pritchards also has interests in the Anglo-Portuguese Marketing Company and it now has plans to expand into the lucrative industrial secur-



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A Pritchard Services Group Company

ity business. Janitorial Services, who provided the guards on Centre Point, expanded in a similar fashion from its own office cleaning business, using the contacts established from one set of business to break into another. Donald Pearce is still on the board of Pritchards, along with the chairman, Michael Pritchard, and other members of his family.

Pritchards also plan to go into the industrial catering business, another industry with high profit margins and a dependence on female and immigrant labour. The other low-paid section at Heathrow which relies mainly on immigrant labour is catering. At present, Trust House Forte hold the contract and rely on Asian labour to do much of the donkey work for them, at the same low wages.

RATES OF PAY

	Days Per Hour	Nights Per Hour
Cleaners Male Grade		
I	47p	61p
II	45½p	59p
III	44p	56p
IV	41p	53p
Females	38p	49½p

The women cleaner's 38p an hour contrasts with the 62p earned by local authority cleaning women employed in nearby Ealing and a Central London rate, which now goes up around the 75p mark after the struggle waged by the Night Cleaners in the early 70s. The T&GWU full-timer for the area, John Collier, claims that the 38p rate was the best that could be negotiated. He says that all the parties are at fault — the British Airports Authority for refusing to include a fair wage clause in its agreement with Acme and its insistence on taking the lowest tender possible; Acme Cleaners for paying such low rates; the women themselves for taking too little interest in the union or in organising themselves (union dues are deducted at source from wages by the employer, thus cutting out any need for regular contact with stewards and union officials during the weekly dues-collection); and finally, the union for its inability to get to grips with the employers. Certainly the women are in considerable ignorance about the union. Although it pays for an English teacher and lends out its headquarters for a class every week, many of the women are under the impression that management has stopped them being members. And there is no support for the women from other sections of Heathrow workers. Not only is there no joint shop stewards' committee for the airport to coordinate activity, but not one section of the workers has taken an interest in the cleaning women's situation. Militant Asian workers in other sections point to the rabid racism amongst many workers in Heathrow, the popularity of the National Front and its growing hold on union affairs, and the low level of consciousness of the majority of workers, and question whether there would even be

concerted action if the women ever did call a strike.

For there can be no doubt the women do hold a certain amount of power. While their economic leverage is minimal, the propaganda value of a well-organised strike could be considerable. Through the airport everyday travel thousands of people, including most of the world's journalists and commentators. The dirt and rubbish that would pile up immediately if the women went on strike could soon make the airport unbearable: Jamaican workers at Kingston airport went on strike in April 1973 and very rapidly brought the airport to a stinking halt. The Heathrow women could achieve a similar state of affairs, given a lot more

self-confidence and willingness to struggle. Small signs are emerging — the woman who hit the supervisor a fortnight ago, the mumblings in the pokey little hole where they eat their daily meal, the willingness to attend English classes after a day's work, all are signs of what could be coming to change their state of affairs by their own activity.

Pritchards meanwhile go from strength to strength, their plans for expansion undaunted. Smooth travellers pass through the Departure Lounges with never a thought for the invisible figures who labour at the cleaning jobs around the airport. And in the hearts of the women is despair, frustration and a small flame of rebellion.



Unnoticed by the crowd, a woman goes quietly about her business. Even if she works seven days a week, she still earns less than £20.00. The Airport Authority couldn't care less about her conditions. The Union are content to settle for a paltry 38p an hour. The other workers don't even know she exists. The Indian Workers' Association expresses concern and does nothing. How to struggle, how to win?

'After three years intensive research into the social background of second generation immigrants, it was discovered that a large number of black youngsters were without homes. It was estimated at that time that in London alone as many as a thousand of these youngsters between the ages of 15 and 21 years old were of no fixed abode. Today, 1974, that number increases to over 3,000 in London alone.' (Dashiki Report, 1974)

Thousands of words have been written about this phenomenon and armies of social workers and do-gooders have been drafted into black communities to 'alleviate the problem'. Home Office monies have been earmarked, under the lofty title of 'Urban Aid', to provide hostels for the homeless, and nonentities suddenly emerged with new career prospects in the field of social work.

The *West Indian World's* lead article on 30 November 1973 carried the fiery headline — 'Who The Hell Cares!' — and having pointed to the problem eventually pleaded for the victims — 'Will we forever be ignored?' The *Sunday Times* colour supplement (30 September 1973) devoted sixteen pages to the plight of young blacks, informing us that the Government Think Tank spent three months examining the situation and the Community Relations Commission is presently reporting to the Home Secretary on homelessness.

State thrust

Never in the history of our presence here in Britain has there been such a concerted thrust by different organisations of the State on matters concerning the black population. Informing the millions of written words and scores of community projects is the notion of the black youth as victim. Nowhere does he/she enter the issue as subject, capable of acting independently to deal with the situation, only as an object over which liberals, black and white, scramble to pursue their missionary work.

In the last year Brixton has emerged as the main battleground on which the notion of 'liberal aid' has been challenged. Here the problem of homelessness is most acute among young blacks, a situation which has spawned a vibrant movement towards dealing with their own homelessness. The victims are in the process of becoming protagonists.

More than 100 youths have occupied council-owned houses in the past few months, thereby posing the alternative to a continued existence in hostel institutions. 'I know that you have to help yourself, you can't wait for other people. Some see the setting up of hostels as a solution to homelessness. I am against this. We need homes, not hostels.' (Housing Activist)

The modern squatting movement (the physical appropriation of empty houses) emerged in Britain in 1968 and has its antecedents in the squatting movement of 1919 when returning servicemen successfully seized empty properties to live in — to the astonishment and rage of the government of the day. In the spring of 1945 empty houses in Blantyre, Scotland,

were occupied, mushrooming into the Vigilante movement when committees, made up largely of ex-servicemen, installed homeless families in empty properties by night. By 19 October 1946 the government announced that 39,535 people were squatting in England and Wales and 4,000 in Scotland. In September the police were instructed to keep watch on all unoccupied property in order to prevent further squatting, and the Home Office instructed Scotland Yard to 'enquire into the origins of the organisation behind the squatters'. The Government capitulated and many of the squatters were given alternative accommodation.

Growth of the squatting movement

By November 1968, the modern squatting movement came into being with the formation of the London Squatters' Campaign, largely organised by professional protesters of the CND period in British politics and subsequently augmented by activists in the student movement of the late 1960s. Their bold and dramatic activities hit the news headlines and the idea of capturing empty houses became firmly rooted in radical political activity. Everywhere groups emerged to haunt property speculators and recalcitrant local councils.

There were very few if any black participants in the squatting movement. Our status as immigrants, coupled with the fact that we are in the minority, understandably bred a cautious approach. What confidence we lacked was overcome by the resurgence of the black movement internationally and its impact on black people in Britain. The cautious approach of Campaign Against Racial Discrimination gave way to the militancy of the late 1960s with the resulting struggles against police brutality and strikes on the industrial front. It is in this climate that the younger generation of immigrants grew to maturity. Their refusal to be herded into areas of traditional immigrant labour, the restlessness and rebellion they display in the schools, their open hostility to being placed in subordinate positions in the society are distinctive characteristics of this section of the black working class. It seemed clear that they would not tolerate the one-roomed existence offered them nor continue to sleep rough and be objects of liberal pity.

It is local council policy that the single person does not qualify for public

No Longer S

In Brixton there exists a movement of young West Indians occupying local council houses. *Race Today* describes the policy of the State and voluntary organisations to



Property Sharks Barricade Home

Ross & Ross well known local property sharks of Brixton Road, also decided a few weeks ago, 172 Mayall Road is a house which belongs to them which has stood empty for a long time and have three children and another baby due in two months.

Ross & Ross waited until the family were out then they boarded and nailed up the house inside and out to prevent the family from getting back in. All the families furniture and personal belongings were inside the house and the door was padlocked up.

Again some sympathetic local people helped to get the family back into their home after spending the afternoon removing corrugated iron, padlock and property company is thus forced to go through the legal channels and obtain a court order for possession.

Brixton's Own BOSS has just moved to 88 Roffin Rd, London S.E.24. It will be apparently

After two days of... which they refuse to... sheltered from various... rehoused in newly com... sympathetic local peop... solution to the problem.

STOP
On two occasions... illegal evictions of peo... to a roof over their head... they are occupying until... present conspiracy betwee... breaking. If these demands... take whatever steps are nee... and lawbreakers, whether

leeping Rough

Indians who seek to resolve their homelessness by the self activity of the youths as against the tendency to provide hostels as a solution to homelessness.

the occupation of the building. In their day-to-day contact with social workers they have drawn several of the latter in the service of the movement. Employed as agents of social control, the black social workers, or sections of them, have been transformed into the opposite.

Council Counter attacks

It is this power that the Lambeth Council seeks to confront. In a document released in the last few weeks the Lambeth Council has identified the movement in order to attack it. 'At present over 100 Council properties are occupied by illegal squatters and many of them are single people. The Council has received many complaints about the activities of groups of single people who are not only illegally occupying dwellings but whose noisy behaviour causes distress to neighbouring residents.

'Since 1971, Lambeth has been offering short life property on which it would not be economical to spend large sums of money to local housing organisations including the Lambeth Self Help Housing Association which was formed by the original Lambeth squatting group. No less than 172 properties are being occupied through these arrangements.

'Action by illegal squatters over and above these arrangements is causing the Council serious concern and is holding up the housing of many priority groups on the housing waiting list as well as those needing rehousing from redevelopment areas and homeless families with children.'

The Council's document obviously aims to isolate the black squatting movement which consists overwhelmingly of single people, having already co-opted large sections of the white squatting movement by offering them short-life, dilapidated buildings. The document reeks of racism, in its portrayal of blacks as 'noisy neighbours', which we remind them was (and still is) the slogan of the fascist attack on black people in the 1950s. They seek as well to pit the homeless family against the single person in order to gain some cheap popular support for their planned attacks against young blacks. They must know that their front line support will come from Brixton's racist whites.

Already the police have made their intentions clear. 'The night I moved in the police came round and asked me who gave me the house and I couldn't stay here because I was stopping a family of eight from moving in' (Mark, aged 22).

'The police came and asked what we were doing and we told them we had moved in and showed them that we had keys for all the doors in the flats. They threatened us with eviction but we knew they couldn't do it' (Frank, aged 18).

As we go to press, the Council is meeting to plan action against the squatters. The organised state machine is poised to attack the black squatting movement. For the black community it is a test of strength and in the impending confrontation we have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

housing and therefore the black youth seemed destined for a life of homelessness or hostel existence. The black squatting movement in Brixton, existing outside the confines of main squatting organisations, has broken new ground. They see it as the responsibility of the council to house them - waiting list or no, policy on the single person or no. More than that there exists a tendency in the radical white squatting movement to take over old dilapidated, short-life council houses, spending hours of their time and energy in decorating the houses, thereby (so they believe) earning the sympathy of the council. Not so the black youth. They do not accept that they have to earn the sympathy of the council or ingratiate themselves to the authorities in order to be housed. Kathleen is 18 and born in England. She says: 'When I left home all the social workers wanted to do was put me in a hostel, but I couldn't stand it. For three nights I slept on the streets and in a hostel for a few nights. I have seen some of the places that white squatters put families in. They are old and dirty. No, I don't want to live in those surroundings. I have taken this flat because it's nice and clean.'

That the young blacks have been informed by the white squatting movement is in fact true, but their squatting activities must be seen as qualitatively different from their white counterparts. For them it is the very best or nothing. This power they derive from the cohesiveness of the black community and their knowledge that in their struggle they are likely to receive wide community support. Whereas the white squatters, who are generally London's floating bedsitter population, set up squats in different areas with no organic relation to the indigenous population.

Power of the Class

The strength therefore of the black squatting movement is the fact that it is rooted in Brixton's black community and has as its base the social organisation of the youth. They visit and frequent the same youth clubs, they congregate in large numbers at social functions, originally moulded into a single social unit within schools. Communication is easy and free flowing; every black squatter we talked to acquired information about squatting from a friend and was able to mobilise immediately others to assist in

This is the Law

Protection against eviction and harassment
It is a criminal offence for anyone to turn you out of your home without a court order or to try to drive you out by threats, violence, bullying or any other sort of interference.
Issued by the Department of the Environment

EMERGENCY BROADSHEETS

But... LANDLORDS' K HOMELESS

THE PICTURE ON THE LEFT WAS TAKEN AT AN EMPTY LAUNDRY AT 121 RAILTON ROAD where police went berserk, breaking in and dragging out Liz, one of the women who was squatting there.

On Monday, January 22, Liz Turnbull and Olive Morris arrived home to find themselves locked out of their homes. The shop below the flat was occupied by two men who claimed that they were acting under police authorisation. They told the girls to return the next day and collect their belongings which would be dumped on to the streets. However, the girls found a way back into their flat. There they discovered their possessions had been ransacked, and posters and curtains had been torn down.

"Law or no law"

Six police arrived and after talking with the two men, one of whom claimed to be the owner, insisted that the two girls leave. When the girls refused, the police said that they would return in 48 hours and evict them. "Law or no law" they said, the property would be returned to the owners.

Two days later, five policemen and the agents returned and began to force their way into the house by breaking the side window. Liz Turnbull was at home and got of the property company went and got in through the shop door. Liz went upstairs and was followed by the police who forcibly dragged her out of the house and down to the police station where she was held for five hours. During this time she was not allowed to see her mother since the police were conducting a charge. She was refusing a fixed address, and was eventually charged with possessing an offensive weapon.

with violence

During this time Olive arrived home and went inside. She was also followed by five policemen who violently forced her to leave the house and prevented her from getting back in. She decided to climb up onto the roof where she stayed for three hours being passed food and cigarettes by the group of local people who had gathered there. When the police failed to get her to come down and with offers of hostel accommodation and went away. She got back inside her flat where she will stay until the council recognise their responsibility to release the home-owners. Road, left empty deliberately by the council and speculators are given to the homeless.

Police evict three families

Before the incident on the laundry, 2 families, the Alls who lived in Louise Court, a desperately overcrowded three bedroom flat in Vauxhall, owned by Lambeth Council, had been evicted from their homes. The council said they had had enough of five years of promises of a solution.

7th January, the families therefore moved into the

Lincoln House in Brixton, Water Lane, along with other employees. These flats have stood empty for years, in a blough with a council waiting list.

solution

Secretary to have a possession order from the council. Police broke in and only three hours after the families had moved in, they were eventually evicted from going back, even though the flats, the children weren't even evicted with the Council, during the night. The families were eventually evicted from the flats, the council had claimed there was no solution was found.

THESE ATTACKS!

From Brixton station have been directly involved in wholly committed to offence except to claim the fundamental right of life is not so. Squatters have a legal right to live in the place they have been evicted from. We demand an end to the police defend our brothers and sisters against the attack of thugs regularly in a few weeks time.

In our Caribbean series we have so far published an analysis of Guyana by Eusi Kuyana, Secretary General of the radical organisation Ascria. Below Bukkha Rennie (of the New Beginning Movement, Trinidad and Tobago) addresses a British audience on the historical development of Caribbean peoples, with particular emphasis on the Trinidad revolution.

The task here is not to apologise for anything. Nor to attempt to justify the self-activity of our Caribbean people in the process of knowing themselves, their relations with each other and the rest of the world, and their struggle to change what they have come to know and understand clearly. But every revolution demands from its ranks the constant need to clarify, every step of the way — its ideals, aspirations, tactics and policies, every link in the chain, must be related to links passed and links to come, a cohesive picture must be painted, and so the revolution sees itself and accepts. And others, whoever and wherever they may be, are forced to come to terms with it, whether they like it or not. To those in Britain who yearn for comradeship with it, there is no need to define international responsibility towards social development, for the era of indifference is long gone by force. Caribbean revolutionaries and masses of people will no longer apologise, no longer fight to justify our actions. That time has also long gone. Today, we see ourselves so differently. We will do whatever is necessary, and what has been done, is done.

We shall not deal with the apologists, neither shall we deal with the contempt bestowed upon us even by 'international revolutionaries', both black and white, who come with their metropolitan mentality to dictate to us what we must do, and how, in our own backyards. For years these two features reinforced each other. The present Caribbean generation has broken with that tradition altogether, and demands due recognition from all and sundry, despite the smallness and seeming unimportance of the 'islands', despite what Vidia Naipaul may think or write in his failure to understand what produced him.

Cricket is not all that we can play, beating steelbands and singing calypsoes to obnoxious tourists, is not all that we can do, nor all we have done. And despite the existence of Gairy, Williams, Burnham and Manley, we are neither freaks nor mimics. We are people, and just about the most misunderstood ones in the world. And, strangely enough, even our own politically-conscious brothers and sisters, voluntarily exiled in the metropolis, seem after a time not to understand, judging from the relationship they desire with the people at home, until shocked by a rude awakening.

A History of Self-organisation

We have always manifested profound revolutionary tendencies, as have all other people when faced with oppression and exploitation and estrangement from the resources of nature. From the moment the Caribbean plantations were filled with slaves and indentured servants, struggles emerged to transform the relations and structures within production, and to be masters of the islands. That we had to make it here with or without help was always reality to our people. And central to our struggle was always the self-organisation and activity of the masses of people, out of which came the only political and economic structures and forms and social phenomena that were/are of any significance here. This self-activity in the struggle for the specific ideals mentioned created the Caribbean people, created the Caribbean nation. That is our identity, there is no other kind of identity. Those who cannot see this process as the masses' only form of 'knowing' or 'conceiving' will never understand the Caribbean nor its people, or for that matter people anywhere.

Skills of self-organisation were developed on the Caribbean slave plantation — the most brutal socio-economic environment yet seen — where every man, woman and child, to the very last, at all times, had to show the greatest discipline, the

greatest responsibility to a people in constant open race/class warfare. This is precisely why, since then, since the 'winds of change', since 'Independence', we have produced some of the most brutal middle-class dictatorships ever to be seen in world history: Batista, Trujillo, Pap Doc, and now Gairy. Self-organisation of the masses has always been the biggest enemy of the house slaves, the free-coloureds, the colonial politicians, the reactionary bourgeois politicians, and even the middle-class 'revolutionaries'; and the Caribbean people have an unsurpassable tradition of mass movements based on self-organisation, spontaneity or initiative at the roots. Dictatorships are relative to who and what the people are; if the people are of high revolutionary spirit, dictatorships, by necessity, have to be most severe.

Today's Repression

Today, throughout the Caribbean, the population (of which 60 per cent is aged under 25) is being massacred left, right and centre as they go about their political activity. Arms and ammunition to the Caribbean dictators are supplied by the United States. Policemen are trained in the US and UK to torture and terrorise the population. 'Public Safety Instructors' are also sent by the US State Department. At the same time, organisations are born this evening and die during the next; plans made tonight become irrelevant by morning time; capitalism 'revolutionises' itself so quickly that propaganda falls flat while still on the manual Gestetner; and imperialism

The Caribbean De-My



penetrates so sharply and deeply that entire communities are transformed into 'giant brothels' in order to survive, while satisfying the needs of Amoco, Shell, Esso, Texaco; multinational corporations that hold the population to ransom and become more openly vicious in light of the falling rate of profits and over-intense competition, the effects of which are thrown on our backs; religious American evangelists appear on doorsteps every Sunday, the Peace Corps in the 'rumshops'; food prices rise by the minute, but salaries only every three years. Meanwhile the mass movement makes and breaks many vanguards and some people wither away 'waiting on the revolution'. That is the Caribbean. The only people that seem to take it seriously are its inhabitants and the Imperialists.

In Trinidad, over 100 people, average age 19, have been detained over the past year due to political activity; over 10 have been slaughtered by US self-loading rifles and submachine guns. People are even shot for pasting up political posters. In St. Vincent, a political youth is executed on the beach after being held for allegedly murdering the Attorney-General. In Jamaica, reggae songs are used to acquire political supporters, and when power is achieved the new government turns and begins to slaughter people. Youths are now arming themselves if only for survival. In Guyana, an attempted assassination is made against one leader of a political youth movement. In Grenada, political activists are shot and chopped, some disappear mysteriously, tear-gas cannisters are thrown into secondary

schools, people are beaten and dragged through the streets. At the moment in Martinique there are mass demonstrations, five cane-cutters have been shot by police who opened fire on unarmed people. And so on. The people bury their dead and keep moving on. *Only the Imperialists and their local puppets view the Caribbean revolution seriously.* It is evident that the biggest 'crime' in the Caribbean today is to be young, and to possess new motivations, passions, visions, to re-create society.

The Case of Trinidad

To understand the dynamics and social forces that operate within the Caribbean context, it is best to isolate Trinidad and examine developments here, for Trinidad is in the forefront of Caribbean struggle and a blown up mirror to the other islands. Unlike Jamaica there is constant communication between Trinidad and the other English-speaking islands (the majority of the Caribbean territories) through the established media of radio and newspapers, and through personal contact with relatives since almost every Trinidadian can trace heritage to the other islands. It was the brutal objectivity and totality of slavery as a social system that made the connection between the nature and process of labour and political power or control of the islands clear in our minds. That was our beginning. The colonial experience reinforced it. This connection remained with the masses despite the entrenching of capitalist ideology and the tendency within the colonial middle class leadership to break this connection. As a matter of fact it was, time and time again, the failure of the middle-class leadership to respect this connection, to tie the struggle within production with politics within 'Parliament', that resulted in them being abandoned by the revolutionary masses.

In Trinidad and Tobago, after the 1919 General Strike, the vanguard of the working masses, the waterfront workers, spearheaded the formation of a political party in order to take the struggle further along the path towards its logical conclusion. The party was to be an instrument to seek political power for the masses, it was supposed to be the vanguard of the struggle within production. The middle-class leadership of Cipriani negated the totality of the struggle and eventually found itself within Parliament, acting in a manner inimical to the struggle on the sugar estates and on the shop-floors. And when the mass movement reared its head again in the 1930s, the emphasis was to move away from Cipriani et al, taking up the struggle once more in the streets, at the roots, in the industries and estates, taking politics back to the people. It was this emphasis that led to the *open* demands for trade unions. The vanguard of the 1930s, Butler's Home Rule Party, by no coincidence, found itself with one single structure, operating both as a trade union and as a political party according to expediency. However, after a few of the members won seats in elections and formed a 'Parliamentary Caucus', the separation and degeneration soon came.

When Williams came to power in 1956, representing the culmination of the house-slave, free-coloured, colonial middle-class struggle within a more than ever strongly emphasised nationalist framework, the working masses united with the middle class to form an all-embracing nationalist mass movement to grasp Independence. To the masses, 'Independence' was supposed to have brought people's power, but within five years of 'independence', it became clear to them that Williams and the People's National Movement only made up the vanguard of the middle class and were not the defiers, but local agents, of Imperialism. The unity of 1956 between the middle class and the working masses was destroyed, and the two opposing forces turned to face each other most viciously. Now, within the framework of neo-colonial capitalist development, we see the working masses, through their self-activity, searching for new forms of social organisation that will twin politics and economics and seize and maintain power, making them masters of the islands. The point is that, historically, political power, according to what our people have demonstrated, was always the ultimate aim. And, most important, there was always the

n Revolution stified



feeling that it could be achieved, it could be done.

Bankrupt concepts of leadership

The first mass movement of Trinidad and Tobago in modern times culminated with a political party, the second with a party and union in one structure, the third with a middle-class vanguard party. Central to all, the parties and unions, is the factor of elected representatives who, in league with the Imperialists or, better yet, whipped off by capitalist development and entrenchment, eventually betrayed the mass movements. All the specific subjective reasons given for betrayal are superficial since the fundamental cause lies not in the leaders *per se* but in the bankrupt concepts and structures of leadership, the processes of representation, which are common to each historic betrayal. The moment the direct involvement and self-activity of the people is replaced by the representation of an organised few, whether it is the union or the party, the mass movement, based on constant direct involvement of the whole people, must by necessity degenerate. The masses go back to normal day-to-day life, divorced from the total unity of all social activity, and the representatives go their way, isolated, and destined to be trapped by the exigencies of the very act of representing as determined in this case by capitalist structures and philosophy: 'Politics for politicians', etc. In the meantime, the masses have yet to be liberated from the humdrum of daily existence.

The questions that plague the entire Caribbean are: what new forms must the coming mass movements bring? What specific subjective factors are needed to harmonise with objective reality? How can people's politics be made a permanent and not temporary affair? But what is significant is that the spirit and the understanding is there. As C.L.R. James says:

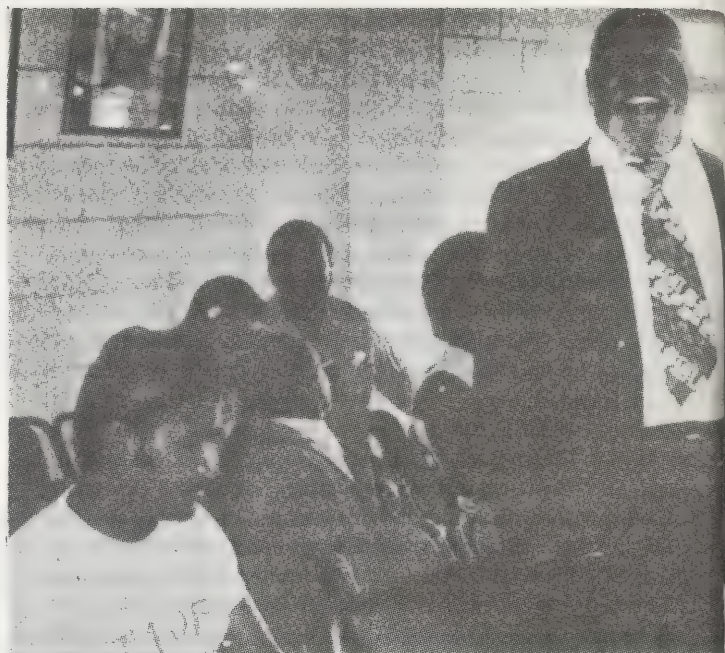
A revolution is first and foremost a movement from the old to the new, and needs above all new words, new verses, new passwords — all the symbols in which ideas and feelings are made tangible. The mass creation and appropriation of what is needed is a revealing picture of a whole people on their journey into the modern world, sometimes pathetic, sometimes vastly comic, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous, but always vibrant with the life that only a mass of ordinary people can give.

Here is a son of the Caribbean soil who, from the piece quoted, seems, at that time, to have understood clearly what produced him. He is no apologist. Neither is he a Naipaul.

Unlike in the metropolis, where the greatest difficulty of the vanguards is to instill the question of political power into the struggle within production, in the Caribbean, many vanguards in recent times have been broken by the masses for precisely not doing this. This says a lot about the two environments.

The Uniqueness of the Caribbean

The Caribbean is the bridge between the developed and the under-developed world. It is neither one nor the other. It is modern. It is primitive. Nevertheless, herein lies its dynamism. Nowhere else has the contradiction between a high level of capitalist production-relations, and capitalist ideological development, and a low level of actual capital accumulation and circulation, been taken to such a zenith. Nowhere else has such a high rate of literacy and formal education been countered by poverty, outdated production and means of production. No other area in the world is as modern and yet so far from the emergence of a 'welfare state', and people die from curable diseases or through sheer carelessness; government's disregard for all hygienic laws or lack of proper equipment. No 'under-developed' area has been able to maintain such rapid and efficient internal communication; no community is out of touch with the overall political and social developments, every community is easily reached, and within thirty minutes' commuting distance from a relatively built-up town. More than any other 'underdeveloped' area, the Caribbean is totally informed on all international developments. Nowhere else is as modern; nowhere else is capitalist development so inimical to the people's existence, and the disparity between the rulers and the ruled so extensive and blatant. It is easy for all to see the



inability of capitalism to produce the goods. Here, most of all the tie-up between union, management and the State is glaring in their conspiracy to stifle the working masses. In some of the islands, historically, the leaders of the parties are also the leaders of the unions. There is no subtlety in the Caribbean. No one has to be 'educated' about the evils of capitalism and Imperialism. The masses come out in their thousands only to hear what the then accepted vanguard has to propose *vis à vis* a clear strategy towards the destruction of capitalism, the breaking of Imperialist ties, and the achievement of some form of people's power, social power.

In 1970, the mass movement in Trinidad and Tobago took to the streets, surprising the vanguard whose action initiated the social explosion. The people, out of their historic experiences, gave birth to the People's Parliaments as an alternative to the old order, creating the existence of *Dual Power* in the country. Yet, the vanguard had nothing to propose. The vanguard failed to recognise the People's Parliaments, set up in local communities with local functional leadership, as new forms or structures for political and social power. The mass movement abandoned the vanguard, and the intensity of the struggle petered out. In the Caribbean today, the only question that can fire the imagination and creativity of the people is the question of *power*. And too often, when the reality of this grips the vanguard, the leadership panics, and all the old fears of breaking with the capitalist/imperialist world come rushing back to cloud the central issue and render the vociferous rhetoric meaningless. And in the absence of a widely based vanguard, that unites clearly theory with practice in the process to capture power, we see sporadic individual unorganised violence whereby people vent their spleen in acts of desperation. And the State capitalises on this failing of the revolution and slaughters people in the course of their political activities.

Vanguards must appear throughout the Caribbean that are able to channel a dynamic force as the people 'sometimes pathetic, sometimes vastly comic, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous' move forward to come to grips, and have intercourse, with the reality of power, their only reality.

The 1970 Uprising and the Unemployed

To understand the present situation in Trinidad, we have first to understand the 1970 uprising. The point of departure within those three explosive months, February, March, April, lay in the fact that for the first time in our history, the unemployed class emerged as the vanguard class of the mass movement, and exhibited great levels of self-organisation and/or potential to

Buzz Butler, leader of the Home Rule Party and working-class rebellion of the 1930s (left). Workers occupying union headquarters (below). 'House-slave, free coloured, colonial middle-class' leader, Eric Williams (far below).



be organised easily, defying the dogma of classical revolutionary tradition. The strength of 1970 was the strength of the unemployed, the weakness of 1970 was the weakness of the unemployed. Their adventurous spirit, flexibility, greed for improvisation and courage took the situation to such a pitch that within three short months, the question of *Dual Power* was posed. The iron discipline that is forged through direct involvement in capitalist production, they lacked. Their experience of political organising was zero. As a class they possessed little revolutionary history, in fact they had only emerged as a class, as a social phenomenon, with revolutionary potential, between 1928-32 when the National Unemployed Movement (NUM) was formed. But at that point, the unemployed were mainly ex-workers, workers who found themselves jobless as a result of the failure of cocoa as a main crop and due to overall crisis within international capitalism and local colonial-capitalism. Their contact with the working class was real, constant and direct. As a matter of fact, the leaders and founders of NUM were all workers.

But by 1970 the unemployed in Trinidad and Tobago

were not only a permanent class within capitalist society, but a class that had developed its own sub-culture and characteristics totally different to that of the workers; a class that had gone through its own dialectical development devoid of direct contact and relationship with the working class within production. Their moving from social rebels to a social revolutionary force had more to do with the influence of the Black Revolution in America, than with the struggles of the working class in Trinidad and Tobago throughout the 1960s. And, as such, it was no coincidence that the first sector of the population that the unemployed were able to motivate and subsequently ally with was the student population. The unemployed infiltrated and transformed every single student organisation in the country.

In this alliance, radical students emerged as the leadership of the unemployed mass movement, being the ones better equipped to articulate the new mood to the entire nation. When the social explosion came as a result of the activity on the street corners and on the campus, the workers and farmers looked on with scepticism. And it was not until the State seemed unable to deal with the situation, after almost two and a half months, that the workers and farmers began to move for a link-up with the students and unemployed. But they were mindful to step forward with their own demands relative to their specific environments and collective experiences. At this point, the State, understanding clearly the dynamics of revolution, did not vacillate and the mass movement was brutally beaten into submission, thereby slaughtering all possibilities of a broad class alliance of all potential revolutionary forces. Even the attempt on the part of the army to join the people was beaten back with the threat of American intervention.

The leadership of the unemployed mass movement, despite rhetoric, were unprepared to deal with the hostile attack from the State — there was no disciplined, tight-knit organisation to deal with the objective reality when *Dual Power* came to exist within the single nation. But, more than this, the unemployed class found itself stifled under the leadership of the revolutionary middle-class students who had transformed the mass movement into a mass party in which the initiators, the unemployed, found themselves playing the role of supporters who followed strict directives that eventually took them nowhere. In the entire process they had forsaken their original local functional leadership for a student hierarchy under the umbrella of a national centralised structure. After 1970, the unemployed broke up the alliance, vowed to stay away from all 'centralised forces' and once more to take the initiative within their own hands to build a class-based organisation to deal with the question of power and a reinforced capitalist state.

The fact that the State began to 'revolutionise' itself to meet the expressed demands of the 1970 leadership, meant that the narrow framework of black nationalist politics had to be extended to take the revolution onto a higher stage. The result has been the emergence of the National United Freedom Fighters (NUFF) — an armed underground socialist organisation, whose task, as outlined in their leaflets, is to take certain actions against the State in defence of the oppressed workers, farmers and unemployed; actions that will raise the different levels of consciousness to the acceptance of 'scientific socialism' and armed struggle as the only instrument. The unemployed have moved from NUM to NUFF.

State Reaction

The emergence and continued development of NUFF is a direct objective counter to the strengthening of the capitalist State of Trinidad and Tobago.

1. *The Military*: the army was purged of revolutionaries and has now been rebuilt painstakingly; in addition, many of the reforms demanded by the so-called 'mutineers' have been implemented, especially those in the direction of giving the army personnel a role in social and economic development. The police have been given supremacy over the army, and have been

equipped and trained, with the help of the US, to handle any situation and to terrorise the population. Since the failure of Vietnam, the US has realised the difficulty and adverse consequences, both externally and internally, of deploying US marines to 'police' the Third World countries. Now the strategy is to build the police forces in the Third World countries, to handle any untoward situation, so the question of US forces may never arise as a result of a military threat.

More has been spent on equipping the police than on agriculture during the past three years. Yet at the same time there are desperate efforts to 'change the image of the police'.

2. *The Government*: the Government has intensified its entrance into control within the economic sector — with antagonism from the commercial class who are being taxed an unemployment levy to assist the government in creating employment and expanding the economy. Trade union leaderships and bureaucrats have been co-opted into the Government's management of sectors of the economy. 'More black locals are directors and managers'. More banks are being 'localised'. The multi-national corporations have been cited as the arch enemies, the international overlords, that are too powerful to be fought. The windfall from 'our' oil due to the oil crisis, according to government policy, is to be used to subsidise food production to keep down prices and to fight inflation. The Industrial Development Corporation has been given the task of granting financial and technical assistance to small businesses and to co-operatives. Unemployed groups were given money to set up 'legal' means of survival. Acres of land are being promised to farmers.

On the other hand, the split within the ruling party as a result of the intensity of the revolution in 1970 and after has been dealt with most viciously. Eric Williams, the Prime Minister, pretended to have resigned which brought the detractors out in an undignified open public scramble for leadership. When they exposed themselves, Williams came back in full glory with a mandate from the old party hacks and literally destroyed his internal opponents. Then the party was solidified, and geared up, to deal with whatever may come as a result of the Report of the Constitution Commission appointed in 1972 to bring further reforms.

3. *The Civil Bureaucracy*: 49 per cent of the Budget in 1973 was spent on civil servants — 'perks' (travelling allowances, scholarships, etc.). All administrators within the gigantic sector of the State machinery have received phenomenal increases, and have been granted exceptions and privileges. The bulk of the insensitive middle class 'lives' here.

4. *The Forces of Mediation*: Grants to Churches and religious organisations have been increased. The Churches themselves have undergone many changes — prayer is now said in Swahili, dancers dance before the altar in what are termed 'folk'

masses, religious communication 'seance' groups are being encouraged. The Bishops champion the poor. The priests have set up organisations like Servol to help initiate economic enterprises in potentially revolutionary areas. The capitalist student institution, Junior Achievement, has been introduced in all schools to instruct students in entrepreneurship.

The Syrian-Lebanese community has now entered the field of 'social work' — before 1970 this community maintained total aloofness. The Housewives' Association of Trinidad and Tobago, a body of middle-class women, has sprung up and is championing the right for reform not revolution. Instead of fighting inflation openly, HATT advises on what in our diet could be substituted cheaply.

No Middle-Class Solution

Indeed, in its quest for stability, prodded by the developments of 1970 and since, and wishing to smooth over antagonisms within capitalism in crisis, the State has become both more fascist and reformist in nature. The tendency towards total State ownership and control is the direction in which the revolution forces them in futile attempts to resolve contradictions. And the more we move into the realm of State capitalism and away from the present mixed economy of both State and individual ownership, the sharper the class struggle, as the petit-bourgeois and middle-class positions, as well as those of the revolutionary masses, develop to suit in dialectical relationship.

The more the most radical of the middle class pose the solutions of Constituent Assembly, Constitution Reform, Localisation of Multi-National corporations, Workers' participation, Free elections, Expansion of the Senate, etc., the more NUFF negates their existence and reforms and poses the question of social revolution in totality; and the more the workers feel their strength, attack their unions, form their action committees and 'infringe on the privileged prerogatives of management', the louder comes the demand for 'workers' control', as distinct from 'participation', and the farmers' cry for land and community control. In action, a new alliance of revolutionary classes — unemployed, workers and farmers — is in the making. As this alliance develops, self-organisation becomes most crucial, one can conclude that the vanguard organisation which emerges will most likely be based on this factor.

Now the sugar workers are locked in battle with the union and the company, Caroni Limited, 51 per cent of which belongs to the State. The canefarmers are battling against a law passed by the Government to prevent freedom of association. And NUFF in the 'hills', according to the police and army, seems to have disappeared.

And the Caribbean Revolution remains a mystery to all who fail to understand.

Workers demonstrating against lay-offs in Port of Spain, Trinidad.



BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to March's 'Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa' and February's 'The Black Explosion in Schools'. Next month's BACKLASH will be on 'The Caribbean Revolution De-Mystified'.

Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa

Ken Jordaan replies:

To clear up the misunderstanding that has arisen on the purpose and scope of my article, I should explain it was called 'The TUC and the South African Black Workers'. That the Editorial Board chose to call it 'Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa' is a matter they themselves can handle. Second, the few paragraphs at the end of my piece dealing with the character and driving forces of the South African revolution were not central to my theme. They were advanced merely as propositions to stimulate debate on this crucial area which requires sustained theoretical analysis. Third, within the limits of the space available to me I can deal in this issue only with one letter. I shall deal later with the others which raise important points meriting serious consideration.

1. Given my terms of reference, Matthew Nkoana tilts at windmills when he accuses me of the 'crime' of omitting reference to the role of nationalism and particularly his own brand as seen through the distorting prism of Bantustan multi-tribalism. His pronouncements on nationalism, with all their sound and fury, are at a purely propagandistic level, hardly germane to an analytical discussion. Accordingly, he fails to characterise the special features of the national question in South Africa, a colony *sui generis*, and somehow avoids stating in which particular socio-economic system his nationalism could take root and flourish. He prefers to vent his spleen on my proposition that the black middle class is incapable of realising its own nationalist programme of non-racial democracy which, in any case, I believe, cannot be attained within the boundaries of capitalism. On this last point he maintains a pregnant silence. Having come out in support of the Bantustan chiefs and their spurious nationalism, he simply tags on to his letter some quotes from conflicting Marxist schools. These do not flow logically from his arguments, having probably been intended as a left cover for the support of a state-created black bureaucracy.

True, the middle class has been the most active and playing the leading role in the broad liberation movement down the years. This in large measure accounts for

the successive defeats the movement has suffered over a number of decades. For this class, which includes small businessmen, traders and commercial agents, is dominated by the professional and intellectual stratum, by those who, whatever their economic background, have been brainwashed by the universities and the churches. With their bourgeois ideology they do not aspire to replace the white capitalists so much as to act as the more effective agents of imperialism. They are, in short, a comprador class. Frantz Fanon has made the classic statement on the psychology and role of this class to whom Nkoana assigns the leading role in the South African liberation struggle.

Fanon writes:

The national middle class . . . is an underdeveloped middle class . . . Neither financial nor industrial magnates are to be found within this . . . class . . . Its innermost vocation seems to keep in the running and be part of the racket . . . The objective of nationalist parties . . . is . . . strictly national. They mobilise the people with slogans of independence, and for the rest leave it to future events. When such parties are questioned on the economic programme of the State that they are clamouring for, or the nature of the regime which they propose to install, they are incapable of replying . . . this underdeveloped middle class . . . which refuses to follow the path of revolution, will fall into deplorable stagnation . . . The faults which we find in it are sufficient explanation of the facility with which . . . the nation is passed over for the race and the tribe is preferred to the State . . . Seen through its eyes its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and . . . capitalism . . . The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the Western bour-

geoisie's business agent . . . (My italics. From *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 121-4.)

To support the imperialist parties against Afrikanerdom; to work with segregatory institutions designed to divert the liberation movement from its struggle and divide the nation; to use the black workers merely as a pressure group to replace one white regime by another — these are the principal strands of which nationalist middle class policies in South Africa have been woven. The working class has been the forgotten factor in this movement because there is no proletarian party to articulate its interests.

2. The recent wave of strikes does not constitute a revolutionary or even a pre-revolutionary situation in South Africa. The significance of these struggles lies in the fact that the urban workers are establishing themselves as a more permanent force in the cities which they can use as a launching pad, under a vanguard party, for a concerted assault on the system. Consequently South Africa is entering a new period of sharpening class struggles. For Nkoana to say that, because of inflation, the struggles of the strikers, risking long terms of imprisonment, torture, solitary confinement and banishment, 'were hardly worth the strikers' trouble' is the height of political criminality. He is obviously also out of touch with his leaders. For Chief Buthelezi came out strongly in support of the strikers, declaring they had the right to fight for a living wage and calling upon the black workers not to act as strike breakers.

The workers have to fight for all types of reforms, using legal and illegal methods, so that, step by step, on the basis of their own experience, they can come to revolutionary conclusions. Reforms are merely the means, revolution the end. That the army and police did not intervene to smash the strikes testifies, one should think, to the large scale organisation and tight discipline of the strikers who threatened greater disruption of industry and the extension of the struggle if the State acted with indiscriminate violence. Whatever the strikers achieved in purely wage terms, their struggles were a great experience in proletarian class solidarity, in a growing awareness of working class strength, which must stand them in good stead for the future. One can imagine how much more could be achieved with a political party to guide them and generalise their experience.



Equally erroneous is Nkoana's designation of the strikes as economism simply because the demands were purely for wage increases. First, one cannot accuse starving workers, who are forced to fight for a living wage, of economism, especially when inflation is running high. Second, a strike in South Africa is never a purely economic battle. For it comes up against a formidable array of race and labour laws designed to keep the workers in chains. Thus a strike assumes a political form from the word go, and strikers are already aware of the political implications of their actions, let alone the risks to life, family and residence.

Nkoana has written militant and competent articles in the past, rightly condemning the Bantustans as an attempt to fragment the oppressed nations and the tribal bureaucracy as the instruments of the fascist State. Now he has second thoughts. It is clumsy reasoning to say that, having 'succumbed' to the tribal divisions, the chiefs have now 'recovered sufficiently' to opt for building a single nationhood. Can a social grouping, with a tradition of collaboration with the white power bloc, change its fundamental class nature overnight? That Buthelezi came out for the strike should not blind us to the fundamental collaborationist role of the class. Naturally in a revolutionary crisis, which splits society from top to bottom, one can expect individual chiefs and headmen to come over to the side of the proletariat and place themselves under its leadership.

One could therefore refute proto-Nkoana with the deuterio-Nkoana and confront Nkoana nationalist with Nkoana multitribalist. He is of course not a tribalist in his personal political position. My reproof is avuncular rather than condemnatory. He should take care not to convey the impression, with his Janus-like policies, that he has a versatility of political convictions.

3. The South African national movement consists of a broad front of oppressed classes: urban and farm workers, dispossessed peasants, small traders and businessmen, professional and intellectual groups. Each class reads its own meaning into the term national liberation. The crux is which class is going to play the hegemonic role in this alliance to achieve democracy and national emancipation. All history testifies that the complete and genuine solution to the tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is possible only through the urban workers and rural toilers who, led by a Marxist Party, can unite the other classes behind them. In this way alone can the intermediate classes act consistently and display political stability.

In its immediate objective the South African revolution must have a profound *national character*, because it seeks to give the blacks complete possession of their

ancestral lands which the white power bloc and foreign powers have made their looting ground and in which the dispossessed are treated as fugitives and pariahs for purposes of super-exploitation. The liberation of the blacks from national enslavement must place its imprint on the class character of the new State by effecting the most radical changes in the distribution of property and wealth. The national democratic revolution will therefore have a decisive *social character*. In other words, the consummation of the democratic phase, under proletarian leadership, is already confronted with the task of making deep inroads into bourgeois property relations. This puts the socialist revolution on the order of the day. It is this conjunction of the struggle for national emancipation with the struggle for the control of the country's wealth that shatters the capitalist boundaries and enables the enslaved masses to make their struggle for national liberation coterminous with the struggle for socialism. History teaches us — and the recent events in Chile are an example — that a national democratic revolution must either grow into socialism or suffer defeat at the hands of those against whom wholesale expropriatory measures are not taken in good time. To limit the programme of the democratic revolution to the capitalist framework is therefore not to ensure the success of democracy but to reject it. Those who would strengthen democracy must accordingly strengthen the socialist movement.

The South African revolution will encounter resistance not only from the local white rulers but from imperialism with its rich stake in the country. This impels the South African revolution to have an international outlook by coordinating its struggle with the worldwide anti-imperialist forces. The socialist revolution begins on the national arena and develops on the international arena. Nationalism and national messianism are therefore a break on the progress of the revolution. Lenin's statement on this question leaves us in no

doubt whatsoever:

Combat all national oppression? Yes, of course! Fight for any kind of national development, for 'national culture' in general? — Of course not. Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just', 'purest', most refined and civilized brand. In place of all forms of nationalism, Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in a higher unity (*Critical Remarks on the National Question, Collected Works, Vol. 20, pp. 34-5*).

Apartheid and 'Alien' Labour

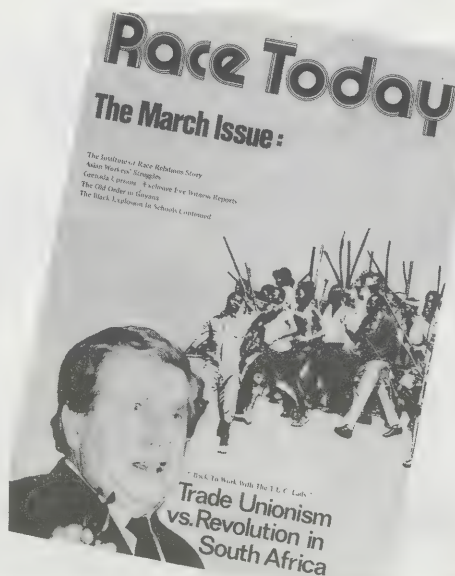
Sir,

I want to basically agree with Ken Jordaan's analysis of black workers in South Africa which places them in the centre of any revolutionary strategy. I agree also with his argument about the TUC. The words of one of the spokesmen of South African capital, the Johannesburg *Financial Mail*, identify the role played by the TUC delegation. It said: 'The most immediate effect of the report is likely to be to buy time for South Africa in the face of threats of blacklisting and boycotts by the international labour movements . . . Its mild strictures on apartheid notwithstanding, the TUC's five-man mission to SA has bent over backwards to find avenues for involvement and thus deflates the growing international campaign against companies with investments here.'

When examining the situation of black workers it is vitally important to consider, as Ken Jordaan does, the background conditions which create a super-exploited mass of labour units — namely, the labour reserves and the system of migrant labour from those reserves. This system provides a controlled supply of cheap, 'alien' labour, removed from its social base and denied any basic rights. Of course this requires a sophisticated system of repression to maintain it. Although a large proportion of workers (probably more than the half that Ken Jordaan suggests, although it is decreasing proportionately) are living in families in the urban ('white') areas, they do so with little or no security (in fact, totally 'illegally' in many cases) knowing that they can be 'repatriated' to 'their Homeland' on the slightest pretext.

Although many contradictions are thrown up in the South African system, I would question one or two of the points which Ken Jordaan suggests are contradictory. The needs of the expanding economy for higher skills and greater permanence of black workers, especially in secondary industry, does not necessarily work against the aims and ideology of apartheid, e.g., extending the principle of migrant labour.

This is obviated in at least two ways. Firstly, in three of the main industrial centres, Pretoria, Durban and East London, the proximity of the Bantustan allows for the Africans to be removed into town-



ships in the reserve and for workers to 'commute' across the 'border' into the 'white' cities and the new 'border industrial areas' where efforts are being made (not all that successfully) to attract industry. This principle is being applied widely throughout the country, although, notably, not including the major industrial complexes of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town.

Secondly, even long-distance migrancy (e.g., from the Transkei to Cape Town) is being adapted in many cases to fit the new requirements. Firms are able to ensure stability in their labour force by obtaining the same workers for successive annual contracts. The 'Call-In Card' system enables the labour bureaux in the reserve to channel workers back to the same jobs, thereby making it feasible for workers who are technically migrants to do more skilled jobs. In reality, it is more like workers taking a three-week holiday around Christmas with his family in the reserve and then returning alone to his job in the city.

The point of this is that the main benefit of 'Separate Development' for the ruling class — that of excluding blacks from the 'white state' by creating puppet political structures for them, whilst using them as an 'alien' labour supply — can be obtained without sacrificing capitalist economic development. It does not involve overruling apartheid ideology. Whether it can achieve the ends which the apartheid ideologues require is another matter.

Recent events in South Africa further emphasise the central importance of the black proletariat. On the one hand, there have been a series of strikes mainly around Durban, involving between a few hundred and ten thousand workers (in the case of the textile workers' strike) which have resulted from shopfloor organisation. The small victories won can only give tremendous confidence to the fledgling unions being formed. Already in Natal, seven unions have been set up in the past few months.

Accompanying this is the further state repression. This time, interestingly, it was four young whites who have been picked off and silenced by banning orders — as a result of committing themselves to the struggle to build independent, fighting black unions.

A trade union consciousness, although a tremendous step forward in the present conditions, cannot in itself carry the struggle to its conclusion in socialism; a political leadership is also required. But as Ken Jordaan says, the freedom of blacks in South Africa can only come through socialism. White workers struggled as a class and won an important stake in state power in the 1920s. They were able to do so within capitalism at the expense of black workers. The struggle of the black working class cannot succeed within capi-

talism because this time there can be no scapegoats.

Alan Baldwin

South Africa's Class Struggle

Sir,

When I read Ken Jordaan's article on 'Trade Unionism v. Revolution in South Africa' in the March issue of *Race Today*, I thought it was an excellent description of the nature of South African society. However, it was only when I saw some of the contributions to the subsequent Backlash that I realised just how good it was. This mass of tired cliché and empty category — 'economism', 'imperialist lackeys', 'revolutionary intellectuals', 'landless peasants' (rather contradictory I would think) has constantly bedevilled any rational discussion of South Africa. Jordaan's clear analysis of the class nature of apartheid is therefore particularly welcome. For far too long has apartheid been discussed in terms of being some form of moral evil, which can be made to disappear by some miraculous change of heart on the part of the whites. In future, anyone who wishes to continue the discussion on this level should first declare his class interests.

Ken Jordaan's statement that apartheid has been the condition for rapid industrialisation is absolutely spot-on. However, it must be recognised that the use which capitalism made of apartheid in order to extract such high levels of surplus value from the black population is no guarantee that apartheid will continue to serve the purpose. Indeed, the constant drive by capital to maintain or increase the rate of surplus value must begin to erode any privileged position the white working class has enjoyed up to the present. Indeed this process is already well under way.

The *Rand Daily Mail* (12 January 1974) reported the quandary of Mr. Gert Beetge of the White Building Workers

Union in his current negotiations with the employers:

... the irony is that Gert Beetge might ultimately be the one to secure fully-fledged artisan status for Africans in the Republic.

For although he shares the racist outlook of the HNP (the Nationalist Party) in trade union matters he is essentially a realist, and as the situation has shaped up in the building industry Gert Beetge is in a corner and this is the only way out to protect his White artisan membership.

The fact is that the trade unions representing bricklayers, plasterers, carpenters, plumbers and masons in the Transvaal have in the last decade bargained away practically everything but the most essential elements of their jobs in order to help ease the skilled labour shortage.

Take bricklaying. After 30 years in which there was virtually no change, the unions agreed in 1966 to allow non-artisan (mainly Africans) to lay paving and in 1972 they allowed them to actually put the cement on the bricks and to grout the joints.

The bricklayer, then, is left merely with the task of actually placing the brick into position.

It is difficult to see what more he can give away of his job.

The employers, however, are nothing if not ingenious and one of their suggestions has been that a category of bricklaying be given over to Africans — brick walls which are to be covered in plaster.

But it is hard to see the bricklayers agreeing to this, since the majority of bricks laid are covered in plaster and the artisan would be left sitting with only a small percentage of the available work.

Take painting. In 1972 the unions agreed to allow Africans to put on the first coat on an unpainted wall, but modern paints often as not only require two coats to finish an unpainted wall, so what is there left to concede?

Take plastering. This consists of four or five operations, depending on the finish required. These operations are: laying the plaster on the rough wall with a wooden hand hock and steel trowel; ruling it down or evening it out with a long wooden straight edge; floating it up (filling in blemishes and 'trueing it up') with a float; giving it a final going-over with a steel trowel; and, where a really fine finish on interior walls is required, putting on a paper-thin layer of putty lime over the whole job.

Of these operations, the second — using a straight edge to even out the freshly applied plaster — has already been given to Africans and my information is that employers are keen to see the first operation handed over to them as well.

This would leave the artisan with only the finishing off to do and no doubt before long pressure would be exerted on them to fragment that as well.

Three days later the same paper reported that an agreement in the Motor Industry allows black workers to be mechanics in all but name.

Thus, under pressure from the needs of capital and the increasing strength of the black working class, the colour-bar is already being abolished in the only area where it is of any significance — at the point of production. In this instance I mean the factories where labour power is produced as well as those where profits are made. In America certain of the slave states specialised in the production of cotton while others specialised in the production of slaves. The different geographical locations in South Africa of



these different points of production were mirrored in the homelands/Bantustans where women and the elderly reproduce the labour power which is consumed in the mines, farms and cities. It is for this reason that the production of labour power has always been seen by the South African authorities as an integral part of commodity production as reflected in population policy.

Now the need for skilled black workers has forced them to concede a settled black population in the cities, schooling for their children, etc. This need for a skilled layer of the black working class is also reflected in the change of emphasis from the traditional method of population limitation by means of a high infant mortality to a selective population control by means of a free birth control service for black women in the cities.

In the process the white working class is being squeezed into a position where it is beginning to fight for its survival.

It is for the above reason that white politics are becoming interesting again, for the first time in a generation. Previously the only difference between the two main white political parties was the squabble over the division of the surplus wrung out of the black population. The division into *verligte* ('enlightened') and *verkrampte* ('authoritarian') cuts across party lines and is a direct reflection of the strength of the black working class. The 'Young Turk' movement in both the National and the United Parties is little more than an attempt to co-opt allies in the struggle between capital and labour. As Ken Jordaan points out, the black middle class in South Africa is of little significance; but the leadership of the Bantustans are considered to be a potential ally as can be seen from the overtures which white politicians are making to them. In this connection one is not using a tired old phrase and accusing Butelezi, Mangope and others of 'selling out their people'. The Bantustan leaders know where their own class interests lie.

So, if both we and the South African ruling class are well aware of the class nature of the South African struggle, there is no need to continue treating South Africa as a 'special case'. We could therefore more beneficially study the issues which are integral to the struggle against capitalism anywhere in the world. Such a study would show that the black working class in South Africa is pioneering the struggle of the whole working class in the same way as has been done by black workers in the U.K. and U.S. and by immigrants in Europe — and that this working class consists of men, women and children each conducting their own struggle within the context of the general interests of the class. Such a study however would have no connection with the fantasies that black workers, police spies, merchants and chiefs have some common

class interest (as Costa Gazidis in the last Backlash would have us believe). Perhaps some investigation of these developments in South Africa could be put in hand.

However, despite having such a large measure of agreement with the article, I must take issue with Ken Jordaan on one point. His remark that 'having abolished the colour bar, the black workers, guided by a leadership schooled in scientific socialism, will proceed to conquer the commanding heights of the economy and place the means of production under public ownership', seems to echo the outdated nationalist movement's distinction between minimum and maximum programmes. The black working class is already engaged in a single and total revolution and has in the process dissolved the capitalist division of labour between 'leaders' and 'led'. The lack of 'leadership' in the recent waves of strikes is merely one proof of this aspect of the self-activity of the class.

Peter Swart

Sabotage TUC Plan

Sir,

So original and so timely a reappraisal of South Africa's capitalism and the situation of the proletariat I have but rarely seen in recent years; and it represents an invigorating alternative to the tired stereotypes of both liberals and old-guard Communists from South Africa. A couple of points, though, do require clarification.

The first relates to migrant labour. Harold Wolpe has shown that the recruiting monopsony set up by the Chamber of Mines served a quite specific purpose: the long-term supply of an adequate quantity of ultra-cheap, unskilled labour-power. For reasons peculiar to the industry, the gold mines could afford the subsistence costs of the migrant, but not those of his family, thence of the reproduction of their labour-power. These costs were therefore off-loaded onto the subsistence mode from which the labour-power was drawn.



In South Africa itself the system broke down because of its inherent instability and competition from a rapidly growing industrial sector post-1933; and could save itself only by tapping labour pools outside South Africa and thus protected from competition by State controls.

The post-1945 State-regulated migrant system, on the other hand, is qualitatively different in that an increasing proportion of migrants possess few or no productive resources in their supposed 'homelands'. Its principal objectives, as stated by Jordaan — the non-competitive distribution of labour-power between manufacturing sectors and industries; the destruction of proletarian security; the undercutting of those workers already urbanised; and the minimisation of necessary social expenditure to the capitalist — are thus subtly different. It should be remembered, though, that the interests served by the State system are those of a class coalition (farmers, industrial capitalists and white workers, of whom the former are politically predominant and the latter strictly controlled junior partners), interests which are not identical. Despite the flexibility of the contract system, which, for instance, by allowing the annual re-hiring by companies of their workers, can guarantee continuity, and hence a modicum of training, the more technologically-advanced, industrial sectors, requiring greater quantities of semi-skilled labour, will have an increasingly urgent interest in the stabilisation of their workforces. Border industries solve this problem only at the expense of others much greater.

Ultimately South African industry, both advanced and backward, can only maintain a *sub-subsistence* wage structure to the extent that the long-term reproduction of labour-power exceeds projected demand — which at present it still does despite 50 per cent infant mortality rates in some Bantustans. But the retardation of the development of the productive forces will give an increasing proportion of capital a positive interest in ending the system, an interest enhanced by proletarian unrest. Given this admittedly distant possibility, it is naive to suggest that the reformist option — for which no mediating African middle-class is necessary — is a non-starter, although of course the political defeat of the agrarian bourgeoisie and sections of the industrial bourgeoisie, and the intimidation of white workers, is a pre-requisite. But the eventual rejection of the reformist for the revolutionary solution by the urban proletariat is by no means self-evident, as the history of most European labour movements amply demonstrates; and it is for this reason, above all others, that British-style trade union experiments should be sabotaged at birth and the revolutionary alternative fostered.

A.L. Brown

The Black Explosion in Schools

Sir,

Farrukh Dhondy's article, 'The Black Explosion in Schools', sets the struggle for survival of blacks in this country firmly in the schools. Few of us would deny the struggle, but I wonder how many see the main arena for the struggle as the schools. I do not intend to discuss Farrukh's political analysis, so cogently expressed, with such style. I would rather comment briefly on the implications for the teacher that I observe. Farrukh seems to suggest that the move to comprehensivisation was a conscious move to house under one roof the whole paraphernalia of the production of labour for a capitalist system. I suspect that the motives were pretty varied and that the opposition to comprehensives shows the concern of the conservative majority in the country that the *status quo* protected by selection might be challenged. Be that as it may, the slow development of comprehensivisa-

tion has resulted in schools that hardly even shift the balance of those that have and those that don't.

What remains is that where there is poor housing, lack of job opportunity and the ensuing stresses, you find 'comprehensives' under siege, and teachers, pupils and parents under strain. In London, the blacks tend to find themselves in these schools. How are schools and teachers to respond? Farrukh's answer nestling at the conclusion of his recent article in the *Times Educational Supplement* (2.11.73) is that the community has to get together — 'teachers, social workers, headmaster and all' as Tulse Hill began at Eastbourne? At the same time Farrukh has stressed to me in conversations that these schools' responsibility is to give students the power to think, express themselves and pass the exams that may lead to further qualifications and will lead to the possibility of leading the movements of change. I begin to suspect that Farrukh,

as a teacher, is stretched by this dilemma that stretches so many teachers.

At Tulse Hill, the Black Studies course in the sixth form arose from concern by students and staff, that the curriculum content was ethnocentric and that many black pupils were as alienated in school as they were outside. The course developed with student participation, initially black and white, throughout. At the same time, a Black Studies club for fourth and fifth formers arose from concern of those pupils that something was happening in the sixth that they wanted for themselves. Of course, the club became concerned with the situation of Blacks in this country and began to have political emphases; of course, the committee has moved out of the school taking these concerns into the community. With equally predictable speed, many teachers have questioned the curriculum, school organisation and community involvement leading to our Eastbourne conference. Farrukh seems to suggest that we all might be surprised that it is not possible to view the school separate from the community. We knew that and grasped the opportunity to do something. Maybe we believed that we had no illusions that Black Studies would 'encapsulate' blacks' 'culture'. At the same time, it is worth remembering the select committee's mealy-mouthed yet total rejection of the idea of Black Studies.

In conclusion, I agree with Farrukh that a number of young blacks reject totally the disciplines of work and that this is reflected with a vengeance in schools, and however conscious this rejection is, it does amount to a political gesture of some magnitude. Yet many of their brothers, who co-exist with them closely, both in the community and in school, are fighting for that part of education that allows them to think, question and express themselves. Schools can change to make this more possible. Where Black Studies at its limited school level and other curriculum development can occur usefully, or where the mere fact of dealing critically with dialect, creole or South London *where it is not appropriate*, is carried through; a teacher can make a proper choice of action. Farrukh has the advantage of a privileged education as well as the disadvantages. Some of us would like to see more young people, black and white, with the ability to analyse, with cogent expression and style — and act.

In the introduction to his article, Farrukh states that: 'The black child . . . has taught the teachers and administrators a new kind of self consciousness. The lesson is still in progress.' I do totally agree with this and hope that we learn the lesson well.

Bev Woodruffe
Head of English, Tulse Hill School

Assembly

Hearing these voices sing to an unknown god
In the false rhythms of rote and habit,
Seeing these children's faces, this spectrum of the world
Worshipping only whiteness, classness, bossness;
Faraway faces mouthing the anthems of an enemy —
I have looked towards the other cheek,
And have heard other words, other sounds
That have changed my curses into joy . . .
I heard the Internationale this morning in assembly.
I saw the world's working class singing together,
I heard their daily solidarity sweeping over South London.
I saw African forests in Flora's eyes, Nigerian rivers gleaming
through their huge hearts,
India's masses in the dark, growing strands of Mahnoor's hair,
Trench Town, Dungle agonies making to resist and struggle
In a host of Jamaican skins moving to each other.
I saw Belfast brick in white Irish faces mortared by rebellion,
South-East Asian ways of fire in a Hong Kong eye,
Mountain fighters in Cypriot smiles,
And London voices, voices pounding from grey streets
Tenanted by men who built and made this city,
All singing, the words of belongingness
Surging from the lips of children . . .
Now, teachers under the world school's roof,
Don't mystify them, give them truth,
Don't give them morning hymns or words
Of Lord of Lords or holy swords
Or God in whiteness or in glory —
Don't mystify them with that story.
Give them the skills to know their brain
And power enough for them to gain
Their world for them and all their brothers —
Teach them facts, not lies that smother
Up their streets and words and skins
And hide the realness of those things.
Give them the strength to push their class
Over the rich man, over the boss,
Over the heaps of lies called Knowledge —
Give them truth, and give them courage.

Chris Searle, 1973.

INTERVIEWS on

Grenada

The New Jewel Movement has been in the leadership of the mass movement opposing the Gairy regime in Grenada. Maurice Bishop, a member of the NJM's leadership, describes the origins of the organisation and its perspectives for a new Grenadian society.

Q: Could you begin with the origins of the New Jewel Movement?

BISHOP: NJM is a combination of two separate organisations. The first is Jewel which stands for Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation. That was started in March 1972, one month after the last general elections, pretty much because people were dissatisfied with the results of the elections and wanted to begin to search for new political forms and begin to experiment with new ways of dealing with the situation. Eunison

Whiteman (who ran in the 1972 election as a candidate for Herbert Blaize's Opposition Grenada National Party) was the principal figure in starting New Jewel.

Then there was Teddy Victor, Sebastian Thomas — all people who have come from St. David's, one of the parishes of the country. Eunison is a teacher, a graduate of Howard University. Teddy Victor is an ex-policeman. Sebastian Thomas is a proprietor.

Now their aim basically was to do three things. They wanted first of all to run a weekly newspaper, *The Jewel*; secondly, to engage in co-operative farming; and thirdly, to engage in social and cultural activities. For example, they organised football competitions and things like that. The paper, though, became very popular and very successful.

And therefore, although they started off with a very, in their minds, non-political kind of bias and with a limited circulation, they found that they began to expand a bit and began to engage in more political issues in the sense of more analysis and so on. In October 1972, another organisation was formed called

MAPP — Movement for Assemblies of the People.

Well that involved myself, Kenrick Radcliffe (another lawyer), and there were a couple of teachers whose names I better don't call because they're in the civil service.

Q: What was MAPP all about? What was the motivation behind MAPP?

BISHOP: Well MAPP was right from the start a political organisation in the sense that it decided that what was required in Grenada at this point was a political organisation which could deal with the realities of seizing power from out of the hands of the Gairy regime. The reason for the name Assemblies of the People, relates to the political form which the movement was recommending. Now people in Jewel and people in MAPP were pretty close and kept having meetings. Eunison Whiteman, in particular, very often sat in on weekly meetings of MAPP and in fact in March 1973 there was a convention held in St. David's at which it was decided that the two organisations would merge. They did, in fact, merge and adopted the name New Jewel Movement. Now that

Martinique

Last month, *Race Today* recorded the general strike in Martinique and the subsequent shooting of strikers by the police. Now a member of the militant GRS (Revolutionary Socialist Group) describes the events leading up to the strike, and the spontaneous rebellion of the workers, not only against French colonial rule, but also against the traditional union leadership.

Question: Does the general strike indicate that the workers are uniting into a single mass movement?

Answer: It hasn't been consciously organised in that way, but a solidarity of action has developed. What must be stressed is the fact that in some sectors the people have organised and involved themselves — they took the initiative, not the unions. In fact, the unions and traditional leftist parties have been surprised by the intensity of the struggles that have taken place in the last three months. At *France-Antilles* (the local newspaper), for example, the union was only involved in the support committee, and then just as an observer. And in the banana industry, unionisation has only come about recently, and only as a result of the activity that has been taking place during the last year — not the other way round.

The position of the unions is clear if I tell you about another episode in the struggle. On 8 January, the unions and the leftist parties announced plans for a general strike. The idea was very popular. But then it wasn't mentioned again. In fact, in the following days some union newspapers stressed even more the posi-

tive results achieved from various negotiations. The workers did not understand what the unions were up to. Nor did they agree with the reasons that had been put forward for the strike. These dealt with old demands — the industrialisation of the island, the allocation of union premises, and so on — all matters of concern, but there was not one demand that related to the immediate situation.

Then, suddenly, having said nothing more about the general strike for almost a month, on 5 February the unions and left parties called for a general strike again, this time to be held for one day only, 12 January. They didn't give any other details. But there was widespread participation in the strike. The workers were all prepared for mobilisation. In fact, the strike was the most powerful demonstration the island has seen since the days of the 1959 uprising.

Question: What part have the banana workers played in all this?

Answer: The banana workers' strike is extremely important. They are the worst paid — at most they get 450F a month.

The banana workers do not have a long history of struggle and their union organisation was very weak. But in the last year their revolutionary potential has been emerging. There has been systematic agitation in the plantations, and political militants have established the practice of having general workers' meetings on the estates.

Then, with the added grievance of the rise in the cost of living, the banana workers went on strike at the end of January, not only in the Lorrain district, but all over the north of the island — Ajoupa,

Bouillon, Marigot, Basse Pointe. And strikes also broke out in the south.

After the shootings in Lorrain on 14 February, some people tried to say that the strikers had been manipulated. That's impossible. It was the mass of the people who demanded the strikes. They decided to fight. Since the end of January none of their demands have been met. Above all the movement is spontaneous. The union and political involvement only came afterwards, in support.

Question: What about the Lorrain shooting? Was it just an isolated incident?

Answer: No, it's not as simple as that. You must understand that the general strike was a compromise by the unions between those workers who were, for the time being, under their control — such as the building and electricity workers — and those sectors whose struggle challenged the orthodox trade union leadership principally the banana workers and *France-Antilles*. For them the general strike was very encouraging. It served to reinforce their own actions, to strengthen their movement.

The day after the general strike many people did not return to work — quite spontaneously. And in Lorrain the groups of pickets carried on, as they had throughout the banana strike, going around the estates, talking to the workers, calling on them not to return to work, or break the strike. The police attacked one of these groups, and then said the incident was the result of provocation by irresponsible extremists.

But before the general strike Martinique's Chief Administrator, Prefet Orsetti, had made very distinct threats

new organisation became NJM and decided to use the issue of Independence as the main agitational basis around which they would begin to organise the country.

Q: So from the start MAPP was an opposition political party?

BISHOP: Well . . . not Party, because MAPP's initial position in fact was to spend a great deal of its time criticising very severely the present electoral party political system we operate.

We saw the possibility of power being transferred, in fact, without necessarily the need for holding an election. So it was not a Party in that sense but definitely a political organisation with a very definite political aim.

Q: Could you spell that out some more? What do you mean by transferring power without an election?

BISHOP: Well, our view is that electoral politics represent one form of politics. There's also another form, which loosely speaking you can call people's politics, whereby, for example, people can take the road, can take to street marches and demonstrations and that kind of thing and

advocate the shutdown, civil disobedience, call on the Government to resign and in that way in fact make a Government dissolve . . .

Q: But this would be a strategy in political organisation, wouldn't it? I mean, it wouldn't be a permanent form of politics?

BISHOP: Well, quite. But our position, in fact, based on Assemblies of the People, is that elections in the sense of the elections we now know would be replaced by Assemblies.

This is based very broadly speaking on the Tanzanian system. We envisage a system which would have village assemblies and workers' assemblies.

In other words, politics where you live and politics where you work. The village assemblies would in turn elect parish assemblies and the village assemblies would also elect representatives to a National Assembly.

The National Assembly would be the Government of the country. But the National Assembly would appoint or elect from its own members a National Assembly Council which would in effect

be the present Cabinet you have.

Q: Well, the charge of communism has been levelled against you. Are you in fact operating with a specific ideology?

BISHOP: We don't accept that an ideology has to be specific in the sense that you have to accept one of the given labels. I mean, if for example you say you are socialist, the obvious question is what does that mean? Are you a national socialist? Democratic Socialist? Labour Party Socialist? I mean that has come to mean virtually nothing.

Economy

Q: Is it possible then that you're thinking about or trying to create some political form that is peculiar to Grenada or the Caribbean region?

BISHOP: To a great extent, yes. This isn't to say that we are pragmatic in the worse sense of that word; that we are just moving with any tide. We have very definite views on, for example, what must be done with the economy; what must be done with the political apparatus, with the State apparatus. And these are views which we intend to implement.

against the strikers. He claimed that there had been 'some misuse of the right to strike', and said it was his responsibility to safeguard 'the right to work'.

The banana workers have decided to prove that they were deliberately attacked by the police. To justify the police action back in France, the State has blown up the fact that the pickets had knives. But in Martinique everyone knows that agricultural workers always have their knives with them — they use them for their work. It is unthinkable that they wouldn't be carrying them. What really happened is that the police trapped the pickets between two police trucks, and a helicopter pursued them from above. That the police attacked is very clear.

Question: What do you think this provocation means?

Answer: Its purpose was to create an incident to justify repression against the workers. Immediately after the incident, Orsetti got police and military reinforcements. One of the obvious possibilities is State action against the revolutionary groups — such as GRS and the Maoists. That is clearly the meaning of the statements that Stasi, the French Minister of Overseas Departments, has been making. In Martinique itself, there is Renard, a member of the Gaullist U.D.R. (Union of Democratic Republicans) who has some standing in the regional council. He's the same type of person as Pinochet (the Chilean who overthrew Allende). At a meeting of the council he declared that every means would be used against the general strike, 'including military means, the arrest of strikers, and, if necessary, the call-up of reservists from France'.

This gives you an idea of what is going on in the thinking of the U.D.R.

The Banana Workers' Demands

Conditions of work must include:

1. 35,46F for an 8-hour day.
2. Real payment of overtime worked each day at 5,54F per hour.
3. Complete payment of wages at the end of each week. No deductions.
4. Total prohibition of toxic products (mocap, neamour, kepone, hexafor and other

organic chlorines).

5. A midday break between 12 and 1 on all the plantations, as well as a quarter of an hour for the morning break (breaks to be included in the 8-hour day).

6. No unjustified irregular redundancies. Work for all.

7. Improvement in the conditions of work in the outhouses (overalls, gloves, wellington boots).

8. Prohibition of piece work for eggplant and pineapple workers.

9. Total prohibition of piece work.

10. Respect of union rights.

11. Paid holidays to be taken in July.



Martiniquan student assassinated by agents of French colonialism during the February strikes.

And I suppose in the context of traditional labels it would come closest to being socialist. But we are not in the least hung up on labels and really don't care what people have to say on that. And Gairy's shout of 'communism' doesn't bother us.

Q: But taking up this question of political organisation, of people participation in the political system, what about the counter-argument that democracy can't function like that because you have too many people to consult and you will end up with a continuous talking shop with no action being taken?

BISHOP: Well we don't accept that. Particularly not in a country as small as Grenada.

Indeed, this system that we are talking about or this method of participation is much more rooted in our people than, say, going to the House and listening to Gairy talking there or going to the Senate and listening to the others talk there.

We have a very strong tradition of co-operatives first of all; and a very strong tradition of things like Village Councils; a very strong tradition of local government before the Gairy Government destroyed it.

So we say it is perfectly feasible in an island that small, with that number of people, to in fact attempt at any rate to involve as many people as wish to be involved in all the important processes.

What we are saying is where Independence only means celebrations, where Independence only means changing a flag or having a new anthem or a Governor-General, well this is bogus, sham and meaningless.

Q: Let's go back to NJM. You're resisting a Government which won 13 out of 15 seats in the general elections of February 1972. What kind of support are you claiming in this?

BISHOP: Well there are a number of myths which have come out. Largely of course spread by Gairy himself.

First, there's this artificial distinction that they've tried to make between town and country. Gairy has been spreading the propaganda that we control the town, he controls the country. Now what you have to understand first of all is that Grenada has six Parishes, each of which has its own town and those are the population centres. And three-quarters of the island's population is in fact centred in those six centres.

Now there are a number of things that can be said about the 1972 elections. The first is that the election was absolutely rigged. Of that there is no doubt at all. For example, some two months before the election the number of seats was increased from 10 to 15 and there was the usual obvious gerrymandering in terms of shifting of boundaries and all that.

Again, apart from that there was the question of the revision of the Electoral

List. The law requires that it should be revised annually. The Government has not in fact revised it since 1967, and yet with so many new persons coming in and with 5 new seats, they gave only 8 days for registration of voters.

And of course they chose a period when there were three public holidays. So, in effect, you had 5 days. The election was a total fraud. And we can go on and on about that.

Q: All right. What about the charge that the people who oppose Gairy are the better off, the middle class, professional people — like yourself — who have been Gairy's political enemies from the start?

BISHOP: Well, that again is absolutely false. In fact while elements of the leadership of the movement do come from the professional class, a lot of people right at the top — because we operate a system of collective leadership — are in fact very much grassroots.

Beyond that, the broad membership of the movement is undoubtedly concentrated in the country not in the town.

Q: So you wouldn't describe the struggle in Grenada as a class struggle?

BISHOP: Well, it's not a class struggle in that kind of sense in which class struggle is often used; in a kind of Marxist sense for example.

On the other hand, I'm not at all suggesting that the sort of broad unity or apparent unity which existed over the last couple of months has meant that the classes have now suddenly disappeared.

That isn't so at all. Clearly a lot of the unity, embracing elements in the Committee of 22 and the GNP, would be based on the question of getting rid of Gairy.

And it is quite possible that after Gairy goes, there could be a bit of a problem.

Q: But you talk about Gairy going, which he hasn't done so far, and here you are returning to Grenada facing a charge for possession of ammunition, what kind of future do you personally see for yourself?

BISHOP: Well as far as I am concerned, once I get back home I am going to get involved once more in political organisation, in keeping the organisation going, in maintaining contacts with our cells and our structure around the country.

Q: Aren't you personally afraid of the repression that you and the movement charge the Gairy Government with?

BISHOP: Well, I mean to some extent obviously there is some apprehension on my part. But having considered all the possibilities and all the pros and cons, I feel that I have to return.

Guilty

Q: What happens if you're found guilty and you're convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment?

BISHOP: Well, the charge which I face I think carries a minimum sentence of three years. Gairy has introduced this recent law dealing with firearms — the Firearms Act — in which he's laid down minimum sentences so the magistrates or judge has no discretion.

If convicted therefore, this is the sort of sentence I'll be facing.

On the other hand, of course, there's always the possibility of appealing to a higher court and I can't see, on whatever possible evidence they will try to produce, I don't see any possibility at all of the Court of Appeal, at any rate, allowing that conviction to stand.

Q: That seems to indicate some confidence in the administration of justice in Grenada. You have that confidence?

BISHOP: Well, when we were beaten on 18 November 1973 and brought before a magistrate on a summary charge — which under our law means that you must be granted bail — the magistrate said that no law book could take away his discretion; that, as far as he was concerned, there was a lot of confusion in the island and the best thing to do was to lock us up.

Now that's the Magistracy. So far as the Judges in the High Court and the Court of Appeal are concerned, basically we have no quarrel. They have been in fact very much maintaining the rule of law and have been acting according to what the law says.

Q: Now, in a sense, the eyes of the Caribbean are focussed on this newly independent State of Grenada, how do you see the immediate future?

BISHOP: Well the country is going to remain unstable for quite a long while to come. Gairy is in the very difficult position in that he's the head of a Government but cannot govern.

There's no money in the country to begin with. Civil servants' salaries for February, for example, have not yet been paid. The salaries for January were paid at the end of February.

Tourism

Tourism, on which they've been relying a lot, has been almost totally destroyed.

Q: But given your own estimation of the Gairy Government, don't you see repression in fact becoming an effective form of Government?

BISHOP: Well, it won't work. I mean, repression has been there. This is the basis on which Gairy took power. The regime was born in violence; christened with bullets if you like; baptised in fire.

But that can't bring the country back to any degree of normalcy or stability.

And this is the problem Gairy faces because the only real chance he has of getting any outside capital coming in, for example, is if he can get some measure of political stability back in the country.

Ethiopian Letter

Comrades

On Saturday, 16 March 1974, the Ethiopian Students' Union in Britain organised a demonstration in London in support of the Ethiopian workers, soldiers, peasants, teachers and students, etc., who had risen against the feudal autocracy. What sort of Ethiopia were the students demonstrating for and against? What was the popular movement of the last few weeks all about?

Ethiopia is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial multi-national state. All the evils attending the lives of working people in the country are the result of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial society. Class oppression, national oppression, the big gap between the urban and the rural and other social ills are attributed to the above.

Over 90 per cent of the 25 million Ethiopians derive their livelihood either directly or indirectly from agriculture (subsistence farming). Almost two-thirds of the cultivable land is owned by the monarchy and aristocracy (big feudal lords), 30 per cent by the church and the other 10 per cent by the remaining vast number of the population. The majority (80 per cent) of the peasants are tenants who, by law, are required to pay three-quarters of their produce to the landlords. In addition, peasants pay tenancy fees, contribute to the payment of tithe and land tax, and render services to the feudal lords (e.g., fetching water, chopping wood, mending fences, etc.).

The infant mortality rate — by the government's own admission, is as high as 30 per cent and there is *one* doctor for every 70,000 persons! The life expectancy of the Ethiopian peasant is 35 years. 95 per cent of all Ethiopians are illiterate and only 10 per cent of primary school age children are enrolled in such schools. The lack of fundamental human rights in Ethiopia can fill pages: no minimum wage law; the average wage for unskilled workers is 15p a day (although after the recent general strike it was agreed to raise this to about 45p); no rights to form political parties; freedom of press and speech very restricted; the country's prisons (the one in Addis Ababa recently 'distinguished' itself when over 100 political prisoners were massacred), are filled with political prisoners, etc.

Peasant uprisings have occurred throughout Ethiopian history. The most recent include the revolts in: Tigre, 1942-43; Gojjam, 1942-43 and 1967-68; Bale and Arussi, 1965-70; and Eritrea, 1962 — still continuing. This last revolt, unlike those in the other provinces, has a more national character, and an organised movement, with a political as well as a military wing.

Immediate Causes of the Recent Uprising

Mounting inflation, high prices and unfair taxations have been eating up the dwindling income of the population. Unemployment reached frightening proportions. The famine, which is still spreading, took 300,000 lives. The government refused to acknowledge for a long time that there was famine, and when it did, allowed feudal lords and businessmen to appropriate the lands of the starving peasants, and purchase their cattle at the ridiculously low price of 50p per head!

In reference to the famine, the *Sunday Times*, 3 March 1974, said:

The aristocracy pursued its land grabbing operations with a vigour which would have embarrassed the barons of medieval England. [The emperor himself] handed over 20,000 acres to one of the richest landowners in Ethiopia, and while the rich spend thousands of pounds on birthday cakes, the urchins of Addis begged and starved.

Opposition to the way the famine was handled came at first from students and teachers at the university. This later spread to other students in the famine area itself, who demonstrated against the government's inaction. The government ordered the police to shoot; 11 students died and scores were wounded. Secondary and elementary school teachers struck at the

beginning of February for higher salaries, and against the absence of standard teaching facilities and the government's educational 'sector review' which was biased in favour of the minority of the population.

The rising cost of living affected other sectors also. Taxi drivers, who went on strike against the 50 per cent rise in petrol prices, were joined by students and unemployed calling for major reforms. The riots that followed began when police stormed schools, beating and maiming students. On 26 February, the 2nd Army Division in Asmara (the second largest city) mutinied. They too were demanding higher pay. They were joined by the navy, the air force and the 4th Division in the capital. This finally brought the cabinet down, with the Emperor and the feudal ruling circles showing signs of confusion.

For the first two days the capital city seemed to be in the hands of the popular masses. Ministers and high officials went into hiding. Leaflets were distributed by students, soldiers, teachers and, later, workers, when they too went on a general strike. The *main* demands of all these groups were:

- Immediate radical land reform;
- Trial of members of the last cabinet and other high officials who are responsible for the country's present conditions; and those who pocketed money in over-

FOOD FOR WHOM?



seas banks;

- Right to form political parties;
- Freedom of expression and press;
- Trade union rights for workers;
- The unconditional right of workers to strike;
- Pay increases for workers, soldiers, and teachers;
- Setting a committee up of the popular masses and workers to oversee that these demands are carried out.

The Emperor replied to the demands by calling on one of the ministers of the previous cabinet to form a government. This rich, landlord aristocrat — Endalkachew Mekonnen — recruited, as expected, from the aristocracy and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. All his ministers (except two) have previously served either as ministers or as high government officials.

The setting up of this 'new' government, the announcement by the Emperor of a constitutional conference to make amendments to his 1955 constitutional amendment, are only ploys to buy time. Endalkachew, in his first press conference on 1 March, listed as his first priority, '... to keep law and order!' He referred to the thousands who called for his resignation as '... radical elements who want the country to go faster than reality can permit'. These words are not the statements of a man who wants to tackle the country's overdue problems. The 'law and order' means nothing but the desire, once secure, to crack down on all opposition. Why has the uprising which was gathering momentum in the first four days (26 February - 1 March) resulted in the triumph of the autocracy?

On the one hand, we had the workers, soldiers, teachers, taxi drivers, students, etc. — i.e. the popular masses. On the other hand, we had the big feudal lords, senior officers, higher echelons of the church, the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie — with well armed but isolated para-military police as their repressive arm. The uprising showed a clear contradiction within the state apparatus. When rank and file soldiers mutinied against their senior officers, they accused the officers of making them clean cars, chop wood, fetch water, run errands, etc. — a reflection of the feudal system outside the barracks that burdened the peasant. And again ordinary priests and other church functionaries struck against their 'superiors' whom they accused of amassing wealth. One of the following could have happened:

1. A victory over feudal autocracy, resulting in the abolition of the monarchy and the setting up of a revolutionary democratic republic; or
2. the popular forces being inadequate to overcome the autocracy, it would end in a deal between the feudal autocracy represented by the Emperor and the comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie and other opportunist elements from the

petty bourgeoisie, including the trade union leadership — who in their real lives have nothing in common with the rank and file worker.

The result reflected the second. For the insurrection to be victorious, it would have required a revolutionary party with a clean and correct strategy to lead the popular forces. The masses did show, however, that they were capable of waging a decisive struggle against the autocracy. But it must not be denied that the rebellion was weak, spontaneous and sporadic. In addition, the peasantry — the major ally of the working class, had not joined simultaneously. It could not. It is scattered, not organised, and in many areas has not recovered from the wounds inflicted on it through the famine. Even then, peasants in some of the districts in the south did take over land which they tilled. They confronted the landlords in a revolutionary manner. And the regime, which has been conspicuously silent over land reform, was quick to send its paramilitary police to protect the feudal lords.

Political Orientations

There are three political tendencies within Ethiopian society:

1. *Popular masses* — these included workers, soldiers, peasants, teachers, students and the unemployed, whose demands we have already outlined.

2. *Feudal autocracy* — headed by the Emperor, they made it clear that they are

not prepared to give any meaningful concessions, let alone major ones. Some of the landlords, in response to the slogan 'land to the tiller', have said that they would '... not tolerate any Robin Hood type attitude to the lands they hold'. While earlier on they talked, particularly, through the Emperor, of reforms. Earlier promises of political parties gave way to Endalkachew's statement, 'only if the constitutional conference recommends it!' The constitutional conference would be attended by 30 members, *all appointed*, and almost all of whom represent the monarchy, feudal lords, the church, leading businessmen, etc.

3. *Comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie* — members representing this class supported by opportunists from the petty bourgeoisie and trade union leaders acted as a break on the insurrection. This group includes senior officers of the armed forces. They strove and succeeded (for the time being) to effect as peaceful a deal as possible, between the Emperor and the popular forces. They could not do otherwise as they neither supported nor relied on the popular uprising. At the moment, these inconsistent and treacherous elements, are the staunchest supporters of the 'constitutional conference'. Theirs is the road to piecemeal reform, *not* revolution. A process that takes ages during which time the working class and peasantry bleeds.

Harry Nsuka

FOOD FOR WHOM?



REVIEWS

Peasant Revolution in Latin America

Gerrit Huizer

Penguin Books, 40p. 166pp.

'This series', the back of the slim volume declares, 'attacks current ignorance of Latin America — an area where thousands thrive and millions starve and where politics lean three ways: towards the United States, towards national independence, and towards Marxist-Leninist revolution.'

This then, is the Latin America that used to be referred to sneeringly by past generations of English-speaking commentators as 'the banana republics', possibly because, apart from boasting climates amicably suited to the growing of bananas, governments collapsed, or were overthrown with monotonous irregularity and not without a little help from Big Brothers across the canals and oceans. But there is another side of Latin America which has been shrouded in fogs of ignorance on the part of the rest of the world — even the progressives — thanks to the 'objectivity' of the media in the western world. That hitherto misty side is the peasants' struggles of that continent, and that is the theme of Gerrit Huizer's book.

Peasants the world over are notorious for their conservative outlook, their distrust of the strangers who proffer solutions to their 'problems'. They also are capable of an irritating passivity towards the abuses handed down to them by their masters, in England of old, in Asia, wherever — and Latin America has been no exception. But is there any reason for this, and if there is, what is it? By working among them for nine years under the auspices of different U.N. agencies, Gerrit Huizer developed a great sympathy for them and gradually began to perceive the 'good reason' behind their attitude. He came out with the firm conviction that properly understood and led, the peasants of Latin America are a potent force for change.

The first three chapters are case-studies of peasant life at the grass-roots in Latin America; how the estate owners — many of them absentee landlords — maintained a reign of terror over the peasants, who in most cases are inherited with the land, or sold and exchanged with it. But despite what Huizer calls 'the culture of repression' under which the peasantry still lives in almost all the countries of Latin America, peasant movements dedicated towards change have always sprung up and at different times flourished in Latin America. There were Zapata's famous guerrillas in Mexico in 1910-1919, the different peasants' groups in Bolivia, peasants' federations in Venezuela, peasant

movements in the Peruvian highlands, and finally the organisations in North East Brazil in the area around Bishop Helda Camara's Recife which is the state capital.

The book goes on to look at 'some common factors as conditions for effective peasant organisations'. If the peasants in all the known places of the world are generally backward and conservative, how is it then that peasant rebellions have been such a part of the Latin American scene for so long? Huizer's experience convinced him that large-scale peasant movements are not only a viable proposition in that continent, but that those that have existed at different times have had 'a number of factors in common that seem necessary for a successful peasant organisation; and among these is support from educated urban allies who can help with region-wide communications, among other things.'

Prose Poem for a Conference

for Andrew Salkey

A people of exile, living in the permanence of tragedy and dispossessed hope. We are the wanderers and a wonder of this world. We have survived, deprived of pristine utterance, appropriating and welding language out of ancestral wounds and sacrifice. Wounds still fresh-cut work under my words. In the colloquy of everything, everything present lives with everything past in momentary and imperfect blindness. We are, such as we are, the living tissue of contemporaneity caught in islands, or thicker land masses, plying our own triangular trade in ourselves, exporting ourselves from hopelessness into hope, from disillusion into anaemic illusion; avoiding the pilgrimage of return into the dark unmentionable habitats that lie in ourselves . . . and lived to fight. Such as we are, we are the salted embryo of a world whose fixities grow loose, while ours, our world — once indecently naked and rootless — firm and gell for the encounter with history, ready. Fragments of roots — scorned in the night of self-contempt — spring to rebirth, the seed of renewal. Exile paid its premium in self-awareness; we begin to know. A message of hope and contradiction, but such is my message.

John La Rose

The last part of the book is taken up with a look at the problems and role of leadership, how the most able peasants who could provide effective leadership are 'absorbed by the system' by often being offered possibilities for individual 'improvement'. Even when a leadership has emerged, problems abound and they seem to be of universal application:

Naturally, personal characteristics can be a risk as well as an asset for successful peasant organisation. A great deal depends on the social system in which the leaders are functioning. This overall system is usually not a guarantee that the best qualities of the peasants are stimulated, nor that the best natural leaders necessarily rise to the surface. On the contrary, one serious problem faced by peasants' organisations is the tendency of leaders to utilize the organisation to further their own ambitions. Leaders do become co-opted by the power-elite of the countryside, which is rarely favourable to effective peasant organisation. In the process they tend to cease defending the interests of the peasants. This could be called political corruption. Economic corruption is another temptation: the misuse of the resources of the organisation or the acceptance of bribes. Another problem is that personal rivalry between leaders over power or economic gains may lead to internal struggles. Internal divisions may also arise from ideological rivalry. Such rivalries are often related to or stimulated by outside forces of some kind.

A formidable list of human problems, applicable to, and found far and wide beyond the back-waters of Latin America.

Gerrit Huizer has written a readable and educative little book which lives up to the declared aims of the series: 'Attacks current ignorance of Latin America'.

Rakhetla A. Tšehlana

Wiriyamu

Fr Adrian Hastings

Davis-Poynter, 1974.

The soldiers found a woman who was pregnant. They asked her what the sex of the child was. 'I don't know' she answered. 'You'll soon know' they said. And at once, with their knives they ripped her belly open, yanking out her intestines and her womb and showing her the foetus, which was struggling convulsively, and said, 'There! now do you know?'

This is an extract from the Wiriyamu report, compiled by a group of Roman Catholic priests and included in Father Adrian Hastings' book *Wiriyamu*, giving an account of this and other atrocities committed by the Portuguese administration in the Tet province of Mozambique over the past three years, the details of which he first made public in a report carried in *The Times* of 10 July 1973.

The report came as no surprise to those who followed the course of Portugal's colonial wars in Africa over the last dozen years. But to the vast majority of political 'innocents' it burst as a revelation, open-

ing the dykes for a ritual of outrage, doubt, self-flagellation (the commemorative ritual of the 600 year treaty of friendship was to be consummated later in the month), recrimination, even justification, enacted over the columns of every newspaper and over the screens of all three TV channels for a brief while as a summer climax, until eased out by the press of more recent, therefore journalistically weightier, events. For these the book comes as a recurrent haemorrhoid.

The details of the Wiryamu massacre and the 'lesser' ones of Chawola and Mucumbura add little to what has already appeared in various newspapers around the world over the years. In August 1971, the *Tanzanian Standard* carried reports of the Mucumbura incident, and shortly afterwards the backwash of publicity attendant on the decision to withdraw and the subsequent expulsion of the White Fathers from the region, together with their testimony, provided evidence of other atrocities. These, however, were not picked up by even the Fleet Street journals of record at the time — indeed, a curious feature of last summer's exercise was the hunt for the scene of the crime and the production by the *Sunday Times*, some four weeks later, of an eyewitness as a peace offering to the 'empiricists'.

The book is more than a catalogue of events. It is an indictment of an antiquated, bankrupt policy, or rather two policies — State policy and Church policy — themselves the product of an increasingly uneasy alliance between the two institutions. Father Hastings develops these two themes with sustained and barely controlled indignation over 134 pages.

With regard to the first, the book draws together the various main episodic strands of the entire sordid affair of Portuguese reaction to the growing con-

sciousness of the Mozambicans to take responsibility for and control over their own lives. Father José Sangalo and Father Vicentè Berenguer maintain that at Wiryamu 'more than 400 victims fell — probably around 500'. At Chawola, 42 named victims are listed with reports of an assortment of massacres, tortures and beatings at other places and other times. The figures are not important except as a statistical tit-bit for some zealous archivist. What they reveal is a way of doing things — a pattern of repression systematised into an administrative and executive reflex, with the chain of responsibility leading back to a group of frightened little men in Lisbon.

In the course of his account Father Hastings raises various peripheral questions, like the issue of violence. He points out that the violence of the freedom fighters must be set in context and seen as a response to the violence of the colonialists and to the system they are committed to uphold. Without going into a political analysis, which he feels is neither his task nor within the scope of the book, he considers Frelimo to be an indigenous, genuine movement of revolt. He rejects the suggestion that it is controlled from outside and affirms that it commands countrywide support, both urban and rural. He adds that those in Europe, particularly the Church, which is a product of the European cultural tradition, must refrain from imposing 'upon African Christians, pacifist standards which they have never practised themselves'.

The second theme deals with the 'crisis of conscience' within the Church in Mozambique — in this case the Roman Catholic Church, whose working priests are placed in a similar position to those in Latin America and, more recently, the Philippines. Unlike these other countries,

however, the Church in Africa has been expressly identified, as a matter of policy, with the State. The Colonial Act of 1930 refers to 'the Portuguese Catholic Mission overseas' as 'instruments of civilisation and national influence'. The Missionary Statute of 1941 numbers the Church among the 'institutions of Imperial utility'. Furthermore, as a result of the Concordat of 1940, which gave increased right of entry and other privileges, the Catholic Church was in return 'accepting bondage', says Father Hastings, 'the bondage inherent in being used as a deliberate instrument for the "Portugalization" of millions of Africans'.

The first major protest resulted in the expulsion of the White Fathers in May 1971. Since the increasing discontent by working priests in the dichotomy they experience between preaching the Gospel and their official role, exacerbated by the reluctance of the bishops to speak out, the massive aloofness of Rome and the continual harassment by the authorities, all coalesced to engender a mood of desperation — a mood summed up by Father Valverdè at the trial of two priests in Beira in February 1973, where he declared in open court that 'the most natural place for a Christian in these times is prison'.

Father Hastings suggests that the first constructive step would be to terminate the Concordat and the Missionary Agreement. This is to be followed by a massive soul-searching within the Church itself, leading to a reappraisal of priorities. 'The Church has not merely to free itself from the charge of collaboration with oppression and injustice', he says, 'it must challenge oppression and enhance the sphere of freedom.'

The Wiryamu victims would have agreed.

David Appadurai

Third World Voices for Children

Edited by
Robert E. McDowell
& Edward Lavitt

A beautiful collection of stories, poems, legends, songs -- about the beginning of the world, the ways of animals, the nature of man, the rhythms of life -- from the black peoples of Africa, the West Indies, North America, the South Pacific, with clear, informative introductions to each section. Includes work by Andrew Salkey, Langston Hughes, Camara Laye, George Lamming, Esteban Montejo and other outstanding Third World writers, as well as many traditional tales, illustrated throughout with over fifty drawings. £1.95.

ALLISON & BUSBY, 6a Noel Street, London W1V 3RB (tel: 01-734 1498)



Back Issues

We have a limited number of back copies of *Race Today* which are still available at 15p a copy including postage. Below is a selected list: a fully comprehensive list of titles going back to 1970 is available from our office on receipt of a stamp.

1973

January: Whatever Happened to C.A.R.D.? Racism and Church-Goers.
February: Holland's 'Red Niggers'.
March: Blacks and the British Army.
April: Our E.S.N. Children. A Special Report.
May: Racism by Post.
June: The Deportation Business Special Report.
Avis Brown: The Colony of the Colonised (Race, sex and class).
July: Single black mothers. Racism and school text-books.
August: Black People and Trades Unions: A Special Report.
September: Race and Intelligence: Debunking the I.Q. Myth.
October/November: Books, Libraries and Racism. A Special Report.
December: Black People and the Police. A Special Report.

1974

January: Race, Sex and Working Class Power by Selma James
February: The Black Explosion in Schools by Farrukh Dhondy.
March: Trade Unionism v. Revolution in South Africa by Ken Jordaan and The Institute Story: The Unacceptable Face by A. Sivanandan.
April: The Sixth Pan-African Congress. A Special Report and Asian Workers in Struggle.

SUBSCRIBE

'For reportage of the racial situation in Britain, *RACE TODAY* is simply unequalled. The paper is lively, open and controversial. Every socialist should read it and use it.' - Colin Barker, International Socialism.
 'In posing the revolutionary potential of Caribbean and Asian peoples the new *RACE TODAY* takes a distinctive place in British journalism.'
 - C.L.R. James.

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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APPOINTMENTS

NEWHAM RIGHTS CENTRE

Community Worker to work in law centre in East London. The Centre concentrates on group problems (housing and redevelopment, employment, education and welfare rights) and the various legal and community responses to such problems.

The work demands imagination and initiative, and a commitment to working with residents of all ages in a working class borough to improve the quality of life through collective action.

Experience of community work an advantage; some knowledge of welfare rights useful.
 Salary £1800 - £2200.

Write for further details to Alex Dunn, Newham Rights Centre, Durning Hall, Earlham Grove, London E7. Tel: 01-555 0142.

Closing date for application 26 April 1974.

PUBLICATION

A HISTORY OF INDIANS IN GUYANA
 by Dwarka Nath, M.B.E., F.R. Hist. S. Second revised edition, UK £2.50, USA \$6.50 post free. Obtainable from the Author, 30 Crowther Road, South Norwood, London, SE25.

PERSONAL

PLAYS WANTED

Black writers are asked to submit Plays for the forthcoming World Black and African Festival of Arts & Culture that will take place in November-December 1975 in Lagos. The Works should reflect the Black experience in this country.

Prior to the main Festival a production of the selected works will be staged for the UK mini-festival in September-October 1974.

Submit plays to: UKAFT, 46 Kingsway, London WC2. Closing date end of May.

HOME TYPING

required by accurate typist: theses, manuscripts, books, etc. No job too small or too large. Contact Mrs. Joan Worrell, 116 Romero Square, Ferrier Estate, Kidbrooke SE3.
 Tel: 01-856 4090.

MOTHERS IN ACTION

Mothers in Action (a pressure group for lone parents) is to compile a pamphlet for people living in areas where day care for children under five is inadequate (which they say is practically everywhere).

This follows the publication of "Plan for Day Care" a ten point plan for comprehensive day care. They would like to hear from groups or individuals who have had practical experience which would help others and would welcome short articles about community orientated day care/education schemes

for their free monthly bulletin.

Anyone in the London area who has an active interest and would like to help our child care co-ordinator compile the pamphlet should ring Daphne McConville at 340 0176.

The purpose of the pamphlet is to provide information on a wide range of day care/education options and stimulate demand at grass roots level.

A free copy of "Plan for Day Care" is available from Mothers in Action, Munro House, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG.
 Tel: 01-734 3457.

BLACK LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE

01-278 9888

Emergency Hot-line Service, phone anytime day or night for help on your arrest, clarification of your rights, advice on your case or if you need a lawyer. Sponsored by *Race Today*.

CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the June issue is Friday 26 April.

April

1 - 13 9 p.m.

Blues Under the Skin and Mangrove Nine, at the Electric Cinema Club, 191 Portobello Road, W11.

10 - 21 8 p.m. Wednesday - Friday 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

A play by T-Bone Wilson *Body and Soul*, at the Keskidee Centre, Gifford Street, NL. Tel: 01-607 0015.

Members 40p non-members 60p.

13 8 p.m. - 2.30 a.m.

Ofo and Sedan Sound, a live group and disco at Africa Centre, King Street, WC2. Tel: 01-836 1973. Tickets £1.00.

20 - 21

Annual conference of *Returned Volunteer Action*, Manchester University. Details from RVA, 26 Museum Chambers, Little Russell Street, WC1. Tel: 01-405 7277.

22 - 24 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Drama Workshop, especially plays with African background. For further details ring Kwesi Kat at Africa Centre, 836 1973 26 8 p.m.

African poetry and music evening at Africa Centre, King Street, WC2. Tel: 01-836 1973. Price 50p.

29 - May 20 6.30 - 8 p.m.

A course in African music and dance with tutor *Basil Wanzira* at Africa Centre, King Street, WC2. Tel: 01-836 1973. £2.50 for the whole course.

May

11 10.15 a.m. - Midnight

A one-day conference *British Army and Repression in Ireland* at Collegiate Theatre, 25 London Street, WC2. (Nr. Euston Station). There will be an evening social; Witches Brew and booze; Creche and food. 50p for conference; 30p for social. For further information contact Troops Out Movement, 28 Lammas Park Road, Ealing.

A Dozen Ways To Help Us Build

Regular readers will know that this magazine has had a stormy past. It has changed from being the Newsletter of the Institute of Race Relations, through the earlier phase of concerned liberalism which caused the split from the Institute to its present position of committed radicalism.

In the past, when it was simply about "Race Relations", it was supported and subsidised by grants from industry and commerce. That phase is well and truly over and our position was clearly stated in the first editorial of 1974 :-

Our editorial policy has been formed and shaped out of the conflict of liberal mediation, of whatever colour, and the social forces of black revolt. Our task is to record and recognise the struggles of these newly emerging forces as manifestations of the revolutionary potential of the black population. We recognise too the release of intellectual energy from within the black community which always comes to the fore when the masses of the oppressed by their actions create a new social reality. Race Today opens its pages to the theoretical tendency which seeks to give clarification to the independent grass-roots self-activity with a view to furthering its development.

That is where we stand. If we are to survive and develop, we urgently need to boost our circulation and income to a position where we can stand proudly on our own, independent of the whims of capital. Circulation has shown a very healthy trend, especially over the last six months. And since January alone, we have put on more than a 1,000 sales per issue. This is excellent, but it is just the beginning. We believe that circulation can be doubled within six months, and trebled by the end of the year.

We also believe that money which has in the past been 'donated' by big business can be more than replaced by money genuinely given by readers committed to the survival and growth of this magazine.

This magazine has battled for its life before, and won through with the support of its readers. Now we are calling on you once again to support us and help us to grow. The blunt truth is that if we do not grow massively in circulation and income, we shall die. We print below a list of ways in which you can help, and if Race Today is important to you, if you want it to continue, we ask you for your help. Without it we shall die, and we have no intention of doing that.

The Race Today Collective. April 1974

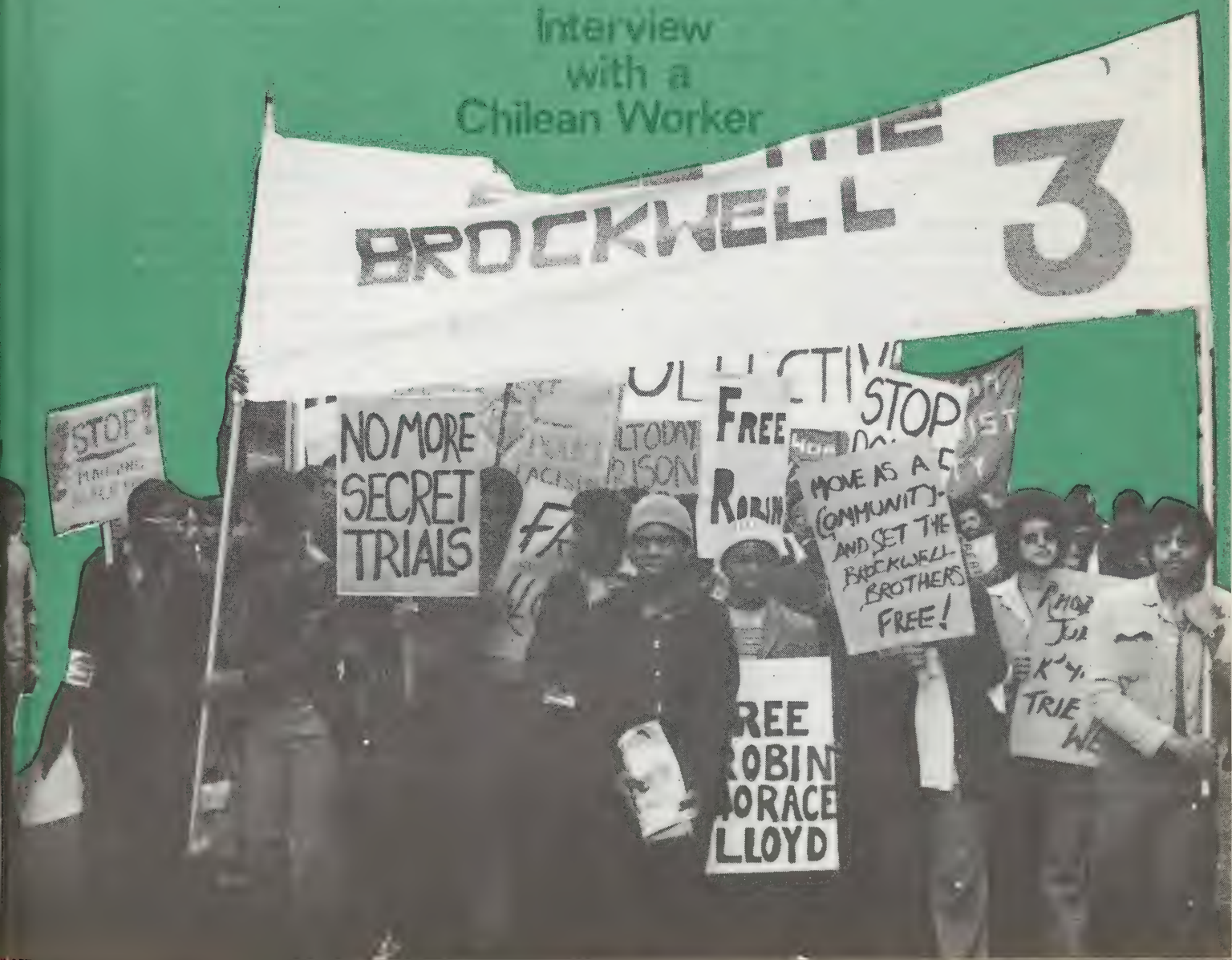
- 1** Included with all copies of this issue that go out to subscribers are leaflets advertising Race Today with a subscription form. Give these to people who express an interest in the magazine and ask them to subscribe. Subscriptions are most important to us because they mean a regular guaranteed income and that people see every copy instead of relying on the few bookshops that sell us. Subscription forms are a most effective way of building up income and circulation. More of them are available from us.
- 2** Do you belong to any social, political or cultural organisations? Would they include our publicity in their next mail-out. Would you ask on our behalf?
- 3** Display our publicity in prominent places. Notice boards in schools and colleges, factories and offices, halls and clubs are all places where notices or leaflets could be pinned up. A selection of display material is available from us and is very useful in getting the magazine known to a wider audience.
- 4** Keep a sharp eye on events in your locality for us and let us know anything that should be reported in the magazine.
- 5** Become a Fighting Subscriber and pay at least £5.00 per year for your annual subscription instead of £2.00. Fighting Subscribers receive in addition all pamphlets and other publications plus regular invitations to meetings. The extra money goes into the Fighting Fund.
- 6** Take copies of the magazine yourself on a sale-or-return basis and push it for us. Take it to school or college, office or factory, political meeting or cultural event. Become a local distribution centre for us.
- 7** Does your organisation have a newspaper or magazine of any sort? Would they give advertising space to our magazine? Might they be persuaded to do a feature article?
- 8** Form a Race Today support group, or join one if one exists in your area. Groups are already formed in London and Manchester, and there are embryonic groups in Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Bristol. Support groups sell the magazine, hold regular meetings with Race Today speakers and local activists, keep an eye on events in their area. Contact us and we'll put you in touch or help you to form one.
- 9** Send us a donation however small or large and ear-mark it for the Fighting Fund. Take out a Banker's Order - available from us - and make a regular contribution on a quarterly or monthly basis.
- 10** Put on a fund-raising activity on our behalf: it could be a jumble sale or a social, a film show or a concert, a small group from whom you make regular collections or a motion through your union branch or student union.
- 11** If you live in London, could you come into our office and help out on a voluntary basis? We need help with distribution, lay-out and printing, with manning our telephone switch-board and working on our legal advice service. Two spare hours a month would mean a lot to us.
- 12** Find new outlets for us, we are always on the look-out for new places. Bookshops, newsagents, community centres club premises, student unions, trade union offices are just a few of the places that can be approached. Ask people to take a dozen copies on sale-or-return and then let us know where the new outlets are. Service them yourselves, or we will do it.

Race Today

JUNE 1974 15p

'MOVE AS A COMMUNITY' THE BROCKWELL PARK THREE

Black People in Prison
Repression in St. Vincent
Interview
with a
Chilean Worker



LETTERS

National Front Omitted

Comrades,

I was very surprised to read in your article on the 'IQ Campaign' Conference (May issue) that you completely omitted to mention that members of the fascist National Front were present at the Conference. If we are serious about combating racism, one of our aims must be to expose, and if necessary prevent from spreading their pernicious ideology, those who wish to use racism to divide the working class. Your failure to mention the struggle that took place at the Conference over whether the National Front should be allowed to speak is a very serious omission as you are ignoring a central question which workers, white and black, will have to face. Are we going to permit the forces of fascism to freely organize to divide the working class over racism? My opinion is that we should not do so and should, when the occasion arises, take such means as we consider necessary to drive fascists off the streets. I also think that all papers and journals which claim to fight racism should as a minimum duty report what I think is a very important debate.

John Graham
281, Twerton Rd.,
Selly Oak, Birmingham 29.

A View to 'Fair' Reporting

Sir,

Having had the honour to serve for 30 very happy years (1918-48) in the Indian Army I have a great love of and respect for the Indian people. One of my daughters, who was born out there, has returned there with her family. They have been hard at work sinking wells for much-needed water and they also love the people. Most of the many white people who have served in Asia, Africa, etc. like their peoples.

I seldom have sufficient time and opportunity to read the whole of each issue of *Race Today*, but I have made time to give extra attention to the May 1974 issue and I cannot help but form the impression of very decided bias and in fact almost entirely destructive criticism with little or no constructive solutions to problems. Harping on the faults of one race (in this case the whites) — and admittedly there are faults — tends to worsen the situation. There are 'goodies' and 'baddies' in all races. It would surely do more good to publish balanced opinions to enable readers to form fair judgements.

With regard to the 4th of your 'A Dozen Ways to Help Us Build' in *Race*

Today: '4. Keep a sharp eye on events in your locality for us and let us know anything that should be reported in the magazine.' May I suggest that the following facts should be reported:

a. The Bishop here converted part of his Palace into a flat for one of the Uganda Asian families, who are still there. I believe that the Archbishop did the same at Lambeth Palace also.

b. In a village near here a house was allotted to another Uganda Asia family and the villagers furnished it and stocked it with food for the family's arrival.

c. The response by the public to the appeal for warm clothing, prams, push chairs, etc. for the Camp near Yeovil for the Uganda Asians was so generous that when I took down some things I found the storerooms overflowing.

d. Some Indian friends of mine have been in Warminster for the first year of a 3-year tour of duty and they have been extremely happy and have made many friends. In their case also the house was furnished and stocked with food for their arrival.

e. When I have revisited India, which I have done on three occasions since I came on Pension, I have invariably found the greatest friendliness and helpfulness from all with whom I came in contact.

Do, in fairness, give some publicity to the other side of the coin and make the magazine more worthwhile thereby.

Lt. Col. G.A.I. Sanders (I.A. Retd.)
Yew Close, 25A New St.
Wells, Somerset BA5 2LE

Discrimination in the Service

Sir,

I have decided to write to you anonymously and hope you would give consideration and try to do something about the injustices and unfairness suffered by coloured members of the Royal Air Force.

They are exploited and treated differently from the white serving airmen, despite the fact they are in the Service for the same reasons, mainly to defend this country in case of a war.

I suspect, without providing actual written proof, that married coloured serving men are allocated houses at the end of a terrace block. This I believe is done to avoid them having two neighbours, thus avoiding the usual expected conflict which they associate with coloured people. I consider this a direct act of racial discrimination. In employment they are often employed in jobs far below their practical ability and skills. Despite their rank, they are usually placed in laborious tasks or isolated to a particular area of the workshop or other work section to do some specific job which

must be completed at the end of the working day.

When serving in an overseas area where the indigenous population is coloured, the coloured service man is not looked upon as a member of the Air Force. He is immediately associated with the locals and is usually abused in the same manner, being referred to as a wog, nigger, coon, etc.

A coloured airman can never rely on his white colleague to support him or come to his assistance in the usual verbal assault which he encounters. His white counterpart usually says nothing and walks a few yards away, perhaps coming back in support of his own kind even though the coloured man is in the right. If the coloured man complains officially he usually ends up being accused of aggression with a black mark chalked up against his career.

Almost all coloured servicemen discover racial discrimination in the service too late to speak out against it, fearing that they may be discharged, their careers ruined, and in the long run their families suffering because of no employment. Moreover, they are often told if they do complain that they either have a 'chip on their shoulder' or that the matter was too trivial to bother with. Sometimes they are just simply ignored. They are generally afraid to bring the matter to any civilian body because they do not want to link their name to the complaint, fearing that the Service, on discovering that one of their members squealed, may take action which would lead to more suffering for the individual concerned.

On the whole in this Service racial discrimination is widespread, but well covered up and I believe that a special investigation should be carried out by some civilian body to bring out all that's 'swept under the carpet'. It will be necessary first to give the coloured Serviceman an assurance that nothing he says would go against him. Coloured Servicemen only discuss their Service problems with other coloured colleagues, as they have no faith in their white workmates. They usually show a high degree of silence when among their white counterparts.

I would advise a close scrutiny of coloured service men's annual reports where you would find the true feeling of the coloured man in the force. These reports usually have some amazing remarks and comments which do in the long term prevent any promotion prospects or delay such promotion for years. There are of course a few 'Uncle Toms', but they are few and far between.

I hope you would do your best to get some investigation into this problem which haunts all coloured Service personnel.

Anonymous

EDITORIAL

Back to Africa

The events in Portugal have reversed the widespread Eurocentric myth that liberation struggles in the Third World can have only marginal effects in the metropolis. What the Vietnamese succeeded in doing to the American State - for the rank and file soldier and for domestic class struggle within the United States - the Mozambicans, Angolans and Guineans have done for the Portuguese army and the class struggle in Portugal. Africans, in the process of struggling for national liberation, have overthrown a European regime and opened new possibilities for revolutionary struggle within a European country.

That the mechanics of the overthrow took the form of a coup can hide and mystify the tremendous popular feeling and the subversive movement which it expressed. Was this feeling a pro-African independence feeling? Probably not. It was an anti-emigration feeling, an anti-poverty feeling, and an anti-repression feeling. But it had not coalesced into the level of organisation which could have, in itself, overthrown the regime. Africans had to open a second front.

The army may be headed by Spínola, but it is made up of the sons of workers in the city and on the land whose only alternatives were to slaughter in Africa or be steamrollered on the assembly lines of Paris or Frankfurt. That conscript army itself was popular and the orders it received were popular orders.

Of course Spínola has his own ideas of where Portugal and the war in Africa are to go. He is related by marriage to two of the largest industrialists in Portugal. He has received a warm welcome from capital in the EEC countries. They know that Spínola and those he represents want first and foremost to make Portugal safe for investment and accumulation of capital. This means, among other things, that the drain of finance and manpower for the war as it has been waged up to now must decrease. Some of the finance that has been pouring down the African drain has been American. Previous events as well as this lead us to conclude that Spínola was probably acting with the blessing of Washington. Besides, after the regrettably ugly taste of Chile, Portugal can make an excellent after-dinner mint, in more ways than one.

Portugal, like Chile, is an underdeveloped country. It was in a desperately weak position financially, and therefore militarily, to dictate the terms of foreign investment. And Portugal, along with other technically backward countries, was an area from which immigrants could be drawn to the big metropolitan machine.

Another myth which circulates among those who believe they live in a 'democracy' is that where there is a particularly repressive regime, one which directly controls the media, education and the church, resistance is only from individuals, and 'the people are backward'. The crowds which we witnessed on the television set on May Day, the traditional workers' holiday, showed no signs of brainwashing, indoctrination, lethargy or apathy. They seized the time.

Spínola's problem, of course, is that they may continue to seize the time. He will have help to prevent them from doing so from Soares, the Social Democrat, and Cunhal, the Communist. Both were in exile. The Communist Party statement offers its help: 'We are a revolutionary party, but we do not use bombs.' The question for Spínola is whether the infrastructure of liberal social control can be built up fast enough by such as these, or whether the initiative will pass out of the hands of capital in military or civilian guise.

From outside of Portugal it is hard to say. But it is clear from the demonstration of May 1 that there has been a network of organisation operating all along, first under Salazar and then under Caetano, which was continually subverting these regimes and their repression, inside and outside the factories, inside and outside the cities. What is also clear is that for the kind of development Spínola wants - he is already asking for 'aid' - the repression, and the technological backwardness of Portugal which this repression guaranteed, has got to go. Social control yes, but with a liberal face, with

trade unions, labour parties, the facade of civil rights; that way lies the highest and most advanced levels of exploitation.

The home-grown technocracy is already outlining plans for the new State. A 'brains' trust, a group of men who are long-standing friends of Spínola, advocate in a document since the coup: a new tax system which would be 'progressive in character' (but one must have a reasonable wage to be taxed, progressively or regressively), and greater State intervention in industry, including nationalising 'those things that are vital to the life of the nation'. They are calling for rapid industrialisation, and all these measures are clearly in aid of that.

This group adds an apparently curious item to its draft programme for Portugal. As well as freedom for the media, they urge the introduction of a system which ensures that public opinion polls are carried out in a scientific manner. Nowadays, even countries which are technically backward have not only an advanced working class but an advanced technocracy to deal with them. Every technocracy internationally understands the elements of social control, the social control of the factory itself and the social control of what happens outside the factory gates, for both of which data of all kinds is necessary.

And now, back to Africa. What have Angolans, Mozambicans and Guineans done for themselves? Spínola seems to have no intention of withdrawing the troops from the African countries which Portugal calls hers. Not yet. His problem in Africa is not too different from his problem at home: there is no infrastructure of social control. The group of planners make that abundantly clear. While they are for self-determination for the African territories, they say: 'One of the great tragedies is that Portugal did not start a really extensive education programme in the overseas territories 20 years ago.'

Those of us who have lived through the British 'education to self-government' can make our own translation. Until there is a stable bureaucracy educated in European-run schools which can govern in the name of the imperial powers, Portuguese (and we presume American and other European) capital does not want to withdraw its troops. Ultimately, however, the initiative is not theirs. The troops may have their own ideas. First, they are tired from facing an armed and determined population in Africa. Second, they now have something to come home to.

The liberation movements are now operating from a position of greatly increased power. But they will be under severe pressure not only from abroad by frightened liberals but also from within their own ranks to make a deal with Portuguese capital. The drive of the technocracy within Portugal will give added power to that African stratum whose participation in the liberation movements ends at liberation from Portugal and does not extend to liberation from capital. The Africans in the Portuguese territories have had the benefit of observing at close hand the disaster of independence under that stratum, that is, 'independence' under capitalism. We all have. And now we know that, what they decide and what they do is not only our business but our future.

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BETWEEN THE LINES

Punfields - Plastics, Profits and Pakistanis

For years, Punfield and Barstow (Mouldings) Ltd. of North London was a paternalistic family firm. But when the old Mr. Punfield died, the factory was sold to Capseals Ltd. Punfields had a production line operated entirely by Pakistani workers - quiescent and cowed during the 60's - while the supervisory and skilled grades were all white. The men were doing twelve hour shifts, using tiring manual machinery and working in poor heating and sanitary conditions. They organised quietly among themselves and formed a branch of the Engineering Union. Immediately, the management took them on in an attempt to break the union. That led to a bitter fifteen week strike in 1969, including battles with the police, demonstrations and appearances in the Magistrate's Court.

The men won that strike and went back to work solid and triumphant. Between 1969 and 1974, there was a constant struggle between men and management to improve pay and conditions of work. Air conditioning was installed; a basic eight hour day shift system adopted; a reasonable rate of pay established with a steady bonus; a scheme of sharing out jobs was evolved so that no one had to do boring work all week. The management recognised that their once-pliant workers had a unique collective strength and started to recruit workers of other nationalities and women workers too - all of them were recruited into the union by the men. The workers also played a full part in the district activity of the AEU, sending shop stewards' delegates to the divisional committee, organising a whip-round for the Smiths strikers, a platform for other men in dispute.

When the State of Emergency was declared by Mr. Heath just before Christmas, the men co-operated in the three-day week arrangements to such an extent that management congratulated them on their achievements. The two sections - production workers and female finishing workers - worked together to minimise redundancies. But at the end of the crisis a disagreement about night supervisors' pay, and the company's firm stand on refusing to pay bonus to the men was used to provoke a strike and a lockout. The men demanded their full bonus for the period of the crisis. Production had been maintained while wages were cut back so they said they were entitled to the agreed sum. That came to roughly £50. The company offered £8.00, then £15.00, finally £20.00. And that was where they stuck.

When management attempted to go over the stewards' heads and deal direct with the night shift, the whole lot downed tools. Negotiations reached

such a state that on the 14 March the men occupied the canteen and sat-in for a fortnight. Then, after they had all left for the weekend, they came back on a Monday morning to find the doors locked and barred to them. Although some of the white women were working - including the stewards, one of whom had a husband who was a union official - the men went home to find dismissal notices in the post for them. Next day, registered letters brought their P45s and Insurance Cards.

The union had made the dispute official, but told the finishers to keep working and cross the picket line. For five weeks, the men maintained the picket, but throughout this period, they received no strike pay and no supplementary benefit. Two local firms held a paltry whip-round for them, but there was no official support such as a

restraint. In the January 1973 Company Report, Cope Allman announced their decision to 'rationalise' their plastics production. They already held an interest in another North London plastics firm - Victor International Plastics in near-by Cricklewood, a mere three miles from Punfields. In February 1974, after an extended High Court action, Cope Allman obtained total possession.

On February 8 1974, a new managing director was appointed at Punfields and the old one moved on. Mr R A Smith was brought into the firm from Coventry and the men claim he was brought in specifically as a 'troubleshooter'. He had been there just six weeks when the strike broke out, provoked as we have seen by an intransigent management approach to the bonus question. Now, a further six weeks later, Cope Allman have managed to close down



Workers out on the picket line at the North London factory.

visit from the full-timer. One night, two workers passing by the factory after a meeting stopped to see if the lights inside denoted machinery being moved. Management called the police and said they were trying to set fire to the place. The police had already been involved to clear workers from the factory, and this time there was a ludicrous scene of sniffing the men's hands and pavements for the smell of petrol.

Now the company has declared that the men have brought the factory to a standstill and that they will have to close it down, with the resultant loss of jobs to the area. This cry has been taken up uncritically by the other workers who blame the Asian men, and the *Wembley and Brent Times*. But all is not as simple as it appears.

Capseals is part of the multi-million pound Cope Allman International firm, whose president L J Matchan last year took a £53,000 wage packet home for his labours. Cope Allman have interests in the plastics business, paper and packaging, the leisure trade and engineering. It increased its pre-tax profits from £4.8m in 1972 to £6.9m in 1973, which wasn't bad for a period of Tory

their troublesome Punfields subsidiary without paying any redundancy money to the workers there because of the strike. As some of the men had been there more than twenty years, that could have cost them hundreds of thousands. They have also rid themselves of a strong and united work-force, and are now in a position to profit from the extensive research and development programme that took much of their energy in plastics last year. As the oil-crisis and the increased price of the raw materials in plastics are going to be crucial in the plastics industry in the next few years, all they will have to do is to move their machinery out of Punfields premises into some other factory with a quieter more docile workforce and get to work on their new processes. They also get the money from selling the lease on the Punfields site. Business as usual.

The men are not demoralised, but they are extremely wary of the official trade union movement. Regular readers who have seen the pattern repeated time and time again will not be at all surprised to hear it.

A Mysterious Death

Within 15 hours of his release from Ladywell police station, Lewisham, Stephen Bernard, a 33-year-old Grenadian, died quite mysteriously in Bexley Hospital. Stephen had a history of mental illness and was first admitted to Bexley on 16 December 1971 as a voluntary patient. Since then he has been in and out of the hospital for treatment.

On 3 February 1974 he was staying with relatives in Endwell Road, Brockley. At about 9 p.m. he became very excited. His relatives called the police and an ambulance. They explained to the police Stephen's history, that he was a patient at Bexley Hospital and that his case history was known there, so that there would be little difficulty in securing admission. Meanwhile Stephen broke free and ran in the direction of his home. The police gave chase and apprehended him. At that point he was taken to the police car which sped off in the direction of Lewisham Hospital, leaving the ambulance behind.

Stephen's relatives made their way to Lewisham Hospital. There was no record of his admittance. Subsequently they contacted Ladywell police station, only to find that he was in police custody. They warned the police that Stephen should not be sent home since his wife and children were abroad and there was no one to look after him. They again stressed that he should be taken to Bexley Hospital. The police maintained that he was being attended by the police surgeon who had given him a sedative which would last over the night.

One hour later the relatives phoned the police once more. Stephen could be heard screaming in the background. When questioned, the police replied that it was not Mr. Bernard but a drunk who had just been arrested. 'Even though I don't want to call you a liar, I know my cousin's voice', enjoined the relative. The police ignored the remark and said that they would keep Stephen overnight and send him off home the following morning.

Not satisfied with the response, the relative contacted Bexley Hospital at about midnight, asking that Stephen be admitted immediately. However, they were informed that nothing could be done until the following day.

At 5 a.m. the police telephoned Stephen's relatives to the effect that he was being charged with damaging property, i.e. breaking a pane of glass in the station. He appeared at the magistrate's court the next day and was given an absolute discharge. The magistrate commented that he shouldn't have been brought to court at all.

Later that day Stephen was taken to his GP who recommended him for admittance to Bexley. On his arrival there, his chest, heart and nervous system were examined. He was in fine shape. At 2.30 a.m. the following morning Stephen died quite suddenly. The postmortem was carried out and a diagnosis of acute bronchitis was given as the cause of death. Demanding an inquest, Mrs. Bernard, a qualified nurse, states that never in all his life had he suffered from bronchitis. His medical examination on arrival at the hospital, which indicated that nothing was wrong with his chest, heart and nervous system, implies that if he was suffering from bronchial trouble it



must have been detected then.

What then was the real cause of his death? Mrs. Bernard has been asked to accept that he died from acute bronchitis, that is, after the coroner's office informed her that he died of 'chronic bronchitis'. Dr. Brough, under whose care Stephen had been at the hospital, is equally concerned at having to accept the bronchitis diagnosis. It just does not tie up. Presently some tissues are at the laboratory awaiting further examination - which may or may not clear up the mystery.

More over, the police role in the whole affair needs some examination. Why was he treated at the police station by the surgeon who had no access to his medical records? We know that he was given two injections at the station. In fact, why was he taken there at all when the police were informed of his medical history and there was an ambulance standing by ready to take him to hospital? Only a public enquiry could solve all these apparent mysteries, and Mrs. Bernard is demanding one.

ESN: Mother Wins Fight

For three years Mrs. Hawthorne and her two children (Donna, aged 10, and Sherman, aged 8) lived in a slum due for demolition. The house was infested with snails, cockroaches and mice. It was damp, with plaster falling off the walls and ceiling, and loose and missing bannisters. As the flat was over a barber's (the landlord was a barber), hair from the shop blew into the kitchen and got into the food.

Mrs Hawthorne told *Hard Times*: 'The children were upset by the conditions. They couldn't sleep, vermin was crawling on the bed. My son had nightmares and began wetting the bed. My daughter had stomach pains and lost her appetite completely. One room was too damp to live in, so we all lived in one bedroom. There was no space for play inside, and outside, with houses being pulled down or standing empty, it was too dangerous.

'Sherman was more affected than Donna. He couldn't concentrate at school and grew touchy with other children. He wasn't getting enough sleep and would

restless in the day.

'His school sent him to the child guidance centre at Kilburn and I went with him, although I knew that all he needed was a decent, secure home, with a garden, if possible. I told the educational psychologist that and even he agreed. So instead of insisting that Sherman went for more tests I decided to concentrate on fighting for a decent home. This seemed the only way to solve Sherman's problem.

'I had a long struggle, but we were finally offered a three-bedroom flat in June 1973 - after 3 years of waiting. You can imagine that we were excited and happy. And it was next to a park and opposite the adventure playground. At last we had a chance to lead a normal life.

'A month later I got a letter from Brent education department saying that Sherman had to start at a school for mal-adjusted children in September. I was very angry and upset. Now we had a nice flat I did not think he needed special help. I told them this, but they said it was up to the educational psychologist. When I went to see him, he said it was up to the department.

'As I wasn't getting anywhere, and Sherman was out of school altogether, I decided to find out my rights.

'I discovered that I could appeal to the

Secretary of State for Education at the Department of Education and Science. It was not easy to get evidence to support my appeal without money to pay psychiatrists, and so on, but I was lucky enough to have people to help me.

'When Brent education department found out that I had appealed they were very angry and thought I was out to cause trouble. But no one there would listen to my point of view - I had no choice. They did not seem to realise that I am his mother and care what happens to him.

'After three months of fighting they backed down and agreed to give Sherman a second chance in an ordinary school. The appeal was cancelled.

'I was grateful to two local councillors who let me explain my feelings and to the headmistress who agreed to take Sherman, but I was very angry with the others who stood by whilst Sherman was pushed around. He was at home for three months simply because Brent refused to give him a place in the ordinary school while the appeal was decided. It was the mal-adjusted school or nothing.

'I am concerned about other children whose mothers are not told what is going on. It takes a hell of a lot of fight if your child is being pushed around, but it's worth it. *Brent Hard Times*

DOCK BRIEF

Mr. Sampson

We print below details of an incident that led to the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Sampson a Guyanese couple who have been living in England for sixteen years. Mr. Sampson worked as a clerk in Gestetners and Mrs. Sampson as a nurse. They have five children, Oliver 17, Stafford 15, Maureen 13, Cecil 12 and Yvonne 6. Neither had come into contact with the police before.

On 9 July 1973 Cecil Sampson arrived at 5 pm, earlier than usual because he had been to the clinic at North Middlesex Hospital - for treatment for his heart condition. He went upstairs and saw that his wife was sleeping as she had been at work the night before; he decided to cook for his children who would soon be home from school. He went to the kitchen and decided to do a fry-up, so that he could leave home early that evening and go to visit his son Oliver who was in hospital. He started to cook chips, beefburgers, sausages and mixed vegetables. His children came home and explained why they were late and then went to the living room and put the television on.

The doorbell rang. Stafford opened it and came back to tell his dad that two white men and a woman wanted to talk to him. Mr. Sampson, thinking they were Bible sellers, told his son to go and tell them that he didn't have time to see them now. He then had second thoughts and, thinking they might be friends of his from work, went to the door himself. As he got to the door, one of them (Inspector Peters) flashed an identity card at him and said: 'We are police officers. Could we come in?' Mr. Sampson said 'Yes' and they came into the hallway. One of them asked where his wife was and he replied that she was upstairs sleeping because she had worked all night. He then asked: 'Which of these rooms do you live in?' and Mr. Sampson explained that he lived in the whole house.

He asked what the police had come for and was told he would soon find out. He asked if he, his wife or children had done anything wrong, and was told again that he'd soon find out. Peters then ordered him into his living room. By now Mr. Sampson felt that the police were being unreasonable and told them he was a working man who had nothing to do with the police, that he had his children's dinner to cook and was then going to the hospital to visit his son. If the police wanted to talk to him they could do so while he was cooking. He would not be told in his own home where and where not to go without a reason and walked back to the kitchen. Two officers, Sgt. Omer and Inspector Peters followed him there. Mr. Sampson continued cooking. Omer stretched over his shoulder and turned the gas off, saying that 'no fucking cooking was going on here'. He then told



Mr. & Mrs. Sampson with their son Stafford.

Mr. Sampson he was under arrest, and cautioned him. Mr. Sampson asked what he had done and was told that he had committed an arrestable offence. Mr. Sampson told Omer that all he wanted was to get him to the police station where they would beat him up and then say he was violent. He told them he was a sick man with a heart condition for which he had been to hospital that very afternoon. At this Omer got very annoyed and said 'Be careful what you are saying, I will sue you for every penny you have!' He then ordered Mr. Sampson to go to his living room, put his jacket on, and sit down and keep quiet, saying 'remember you're walking on thin ice'.

Mr. Sampson was sitting in his living room with his son Stafford (Omer had gone to shut the back door) when he heard a loud bang coming from the room above - his bedroom. He then heard his wife scream: 'You are a man, you should not do this to me. Help me, oh God this man hit me'. He then heard the muffled cries of his wife.

Upstairs, Mrs. Sampson was in bed dozing, her two daughters were sitting in her room, when a man and a woman burst in (Inspector Peters and WPC Johannsen). The woman said 'You are under arrest'. Mrs. Sampson stretched over to pick up the telephone, at the same time trying to put her dressing gown on. She rang her friend and begged her to come over, saying there were two people in her room who said they were arresting her. She asked her friend to get a solicitor and come immediately. As she was talking Peters grabbed the telephone from her, cut the call off, and hit her across the face. She fell to the ground and was kicked by WPC Johannsen. Mrs. Sampson started to scream. Peters then put a lock around her neck. Her two daughters who had witnessed the whole scene started to cry.

Downstairs, Mr. Sampson jumped out of his chair, tilting it forward so that it fell back with a bang and went to run upstairs. As he got in the hallway he saw Omer coming towards him with the saucepan of hot oil, which he threw at him saying 'where the hell do you think you are going'. Omer advanced towards him, the empty pot in one hand. Mr. Sampson, in desperation, hit out trying to knock the pan out of his hand. Omer then grabbed hold of him in a stranglehold, shaking him violently and kneed him in the groin, he fell down with Omer on top of him. By now Mr. Sampson could feel a vice-like pain in his heart and tried to loosen

Omer's grip on his clothing. He managed to push him from him. He could hear his son shouting at Omer: 'Why are you doing this to my dad, he has a bad heart'. Mr. Sampson continued to try and free himself terrified at what might be happening to his wife and at his own heart condition.

His son tried to make telephone calls twice and was prevented by Omer, who swore at the child and dragged the telephone away. The boy began to plead for Omer to leave his dad alone and Omer took the saucepan and struck the boy across the head with it. Omer then advanced towards Mr. Sampson, shouting 'You bastard, you bastard'. Mr. Sampson picked up the standard lamp which was nearby and swung it from left to right to prevent Omer from coming any nearer. Omer advanced and ducked. The base of the lamp hit Omer at the back of the neck. Omer turned, walked back and fell to the floor, got up again and fell, this time hitting the side of his head on the edge of the radiogram, he got up and fell again.

Inspector Peters then came into the living room, followed by a crowd of uniformed officers, and he ordered two of them to take Mr. Sampson to Tottenham Police station. Mrs. Sampson was forcibly removed by five police officers who carried her downstairs to the police van.

Mr. Sampson was charged with attempted murder and grievous bodily harm to Omer, and remanded in custody until 24 July. Mrs. Sampson was charged with assaulting Peters and Johannsen. Both were tried at the Old Bailey, Mrs. Sampson was acquitted of all charges. Mr. Sampson was sent to prison for two years. Both put up a consistent struggle in the court - details of which shall be published in next month's *Race Today*. The case is now under appeal.

In the July issue of *Race Today* we reported the case of Linton Kwesi Johnson, a young West Indian student and poet, who was arrested in Brixton and beaten by the police when he went to aid Jewel Prince and Errol Tucker who were being arrested by plain clothes officers: PC Farr, PC Leavers and PC Bloom from Brixton police station. At the station he and to see a doctor. When the case was heard they were all acquitted of the charges made against them.

Linton then lodged a complaint against Farr, Leavers and Bloom for assault, perjury and unlawful arrest.

The complaint was investigated by their superior officer. The file was passed on to the Director of Public Prosecutions who has replied saying: 'Having carefully considered all the evidence, I have reached the conclusion that it is not such as to justify the institutions of criminal proceedings against the Officers concerned.'

NEWS BACKGROUND

'Move as a Community'

In March, three black youths from South London were sentenced at the Old Bailey to three years imprisonment on charges which stemmed from the Brockwell Park Incident last summer. Such is the importance of this trial that we have devoted seven pages to an investigation and analysis of the event and the developments that followed.

Every year, the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain brings a fair to Brockwell Park. Situated half a mile south of the centre of Brixton, it's a short three-penny bus ride down Railton Road from the concrete and iron of the city to the comparative quiet of the acres of grassland which constitute the nearest thing many of the area's children will ever get to the countryside. The fair is a major event in the local calendar, an opportunity to get out and about on a summer's evening, riding the bumper cars and the cake walk, somewhere to take the kids for a good night out. Lambeth local authority planned a spectacular finale for last year's fair: at 9.30 in the evening of Saturday, 9 June 1973, they laid on an enormous firework display which rent the warm mid-summer air with light and colour and sound.

* * *

Horace Parkinson, a 19-year-old youth worker at the Saint Mathews' youth club, lives with his parents and his brother, Linton, in a small, neat terraced house in Haycroft Road in Brixton. The house is a typical hard-working, respectable first-generation West Indian home. The front room, carefully furnished and colourfully decorated, is preserved for the best. In the hall, an illustrated notice proclaims that Jesus watches over the people in the house. Down two stairs at the back is the living room, a warm and cosy area which bustles with life. 'The house was always full of boys', recalls his father. 'They were always around for Horace or Linton.' In the backyard there is a weight-lifting set: Horace was nearly strong enough to beat his father, a London Transport inspector, at snatches and pulls.

As the firework display was getting under way at the fair, Horace Parkinson was setting off for his evening out with his friends, Hubert Simpson and Alec Carty. The plan was to drive round in the Humber Sceptre to meet some girls, and then go on to a party in North London. Horace was a smart dresser, known for his fastidiousness about his appearance: that night he was wearing a new and spotless white jacket. As the car drove past the fair, the boys and a couple of girl friends decided to stop and check it out. They parked along Dulwich Road just as the crowds started to leave. Horace was going to look for a girlfriend.

Robin Sterling had left for the fair much earlier. The 14-year-old from Tulse Hill School finished his paper-round that morning and picked up his weekly wages with an eager anticipation. He was a small, quiet boy, keen on running and skating; a boy who went to bed at 9 every night, except Saturdays when he might

be allowed to go down into Brixton for a film. His employer trusted him absolutely: he received an extra £1 each week for waking him and helping to mark-up the papers. When the newsagent went on holiday, he gave Robin an extra fiver to keep an eye on the shop for him. That night he left the house in Norbury with his two younger sisters, Carol and Maur-een. His father, working for British Rail, was originally to have come and collected his family after the fair, but someone fell ill at work and Mr. Sterling ended up working a 16-hour shift that night. Instead, Mrs. Sterling saw them off at the door, warned them to take care and told him to look after his sisters. The three of them spent the whole evening at the fair, and when the fireworks were over, they joined the crush heading for the Dulwich Road exit.

* * *

At the same time, a local white lad who had been drinking in the pub left to walk the few yards up the road to the fish and chip shop where he was a regular



Outside the fish and chip shop a fight broke out, a knife flashed, cold and silver in the summer night.

customer. He joined the queue in there, swelled beyond its normal proportions with the people leaving the fair, and leaned on the counter while he waited to place his order. Behind him, a group of black youths on their way to a blues waited. A shoving and a jostling broke out, the proprietor tried to hustle them out of his shop and in the melee that burst out of the door, a knife was drawn, flashed silver and cold in the summer air and the youth went down. Pandemonium broke out: the crowd pressed around, curious and bewildered at the sudden flash of violence, while the stabbed boy's mate ran over to the fair to fetch help. Police Constable Derek Castle, who was on duty that night at the fair and who was himself a regular at the fish and chip shop, went into the crowd and saw the stabbed youth lying on the ground: he was immediately joined by Detective

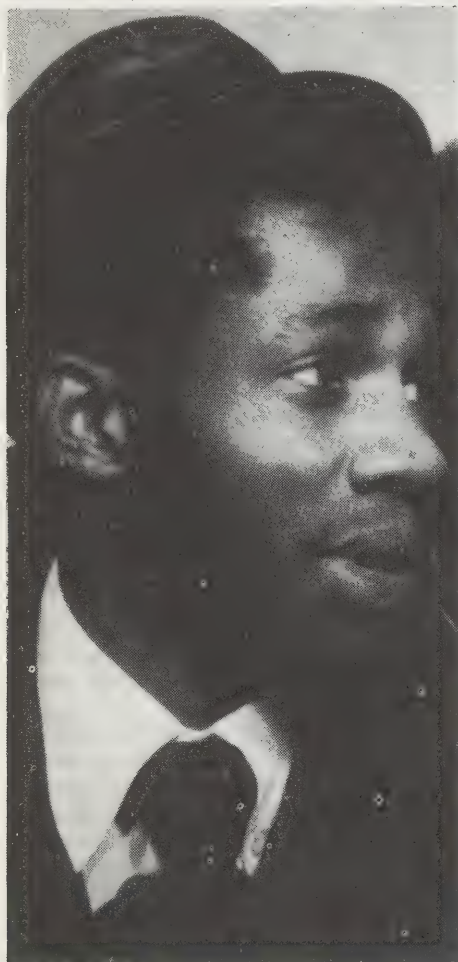
Harry Tucker and Temporary Detective Constable Harper, who had been assigned to cover the fair in plain clothes.

Lloyd James was also at the fair that night. First he went with some friends to Sheperds' Youth Club in Railton Road, and then he moved on to the fair. He was going on afterwards to a party, so he went home and got changed. Wearing his characteristic snap brimmed hat and his smart clothes, he walked back the half mile or so to the Park and saw the crowd outside the fish and chip shop. He went to see what was happening.

Lloyd is 18 years old. He is in some ways typical of a group of youths who live in Brixton. He was born in Jamaica and came over to live with his mother when he was 9. He attended a local primary school and while he was there, his teacher reported that he wouldn't take in his lessons, that he had a quick temper and that she couldn't deal with him. Unusually, he was transferred to the ILEA special school in North Kent. For two years, he only saw his mother every fortnight. Then he was transferred back to an ESN school in Dulwich. He left school at 15, and took his first job in a factory making dummies for tailors' shop windows. His involvement with the police began when he left school. He didn't like his job and left it. He got a job in a canteen, didn't like it and left. His mother saw an advertisement in the South London Press for a laundry porter and Lloyd went down for the job after she had phoned to confirm that it still existed. But when he started with the firm, he was put to work loading four large machines with laundry for £14.00 a week. Mrs. James remembers that he would come home exhausted and unable to move his arm because of the pains.

In the evenings, Lloyd would get around Brixton with his friends, and he was soon well-known to the police and constantly picked up by them. In three years, he had half a dozen convictions, ranging from suspicious behaviour through theft to assaulting a police officer. By the time of the Brockwell Park fair, he had taken to going around with groups of girls because he had found he was less likely to be picked up by the police if he was in female company. Girls he knew recall him as being always around the scene, quiet but good humoured. He would tell his mother about it, asking: 'What chance do I have if I can't even go out on the streets? I don't do anything and they pick me up.' Lloyd had already done three months in a remand home. He didn't want to go inside again.

* * *



Lloyd James

As the curious crowd pressed around the scene of the tragedy, the police felt themselves losing their grip of the situation. As they saw it, they were outnumbered by a 'threatening and hostile group of black youths', eager for confrontation. Castles pulled out his radio and called for help. Harper and Tucker drew their truncheons and attempted to force the crowd back. But the more they pushed the front, the more people joined the throng behind as they poured out of the gates at the south end of Brockwell Park. The fireworks had finished, the fair was closing down and fathers with children in their arms joined youngsters dressed in their Saturday night best in trying to see what had happened on the other side of the road. The more Harper and Tucker pushed and shoved, the thicker and more curious the crowd became. Castles joined his colleagues, by now thoroughly rattled by what was happening.

At the front of that crowd was Lloyd James. He was pushed from behind, and, although he tried to stand his ground, the press of the curious behind him forced him towards the body of the injured man. He felt a hand in his face, told its owner to take it out, and he was back face-to-face with his old adversary, temporary Detective Constable Harper, who had arrested him before. 'How would you like to be nicked for assaulting a policeman in the course of his duty?' asked Harper. 'Leave it alone, Lloydie', said his mate, who was standing next to him. 'He's looking for trouble.'

Temporary Detective Harper heard

this exchange, grabbed hold of Lloyd James by his lapels and kned him in the genitals. Lloyd James, knowing just what was at stake if he got pulled in again, banged Harper a good one and turned to run. But the crowd hemmed him in, held him back. No place to run, no chance of making it back to Railton Road. Harper had hold of him and was kicking him in the groin. Castles joined the fight. Together, they pushed him against the wall, punched him in the face, threw him to the floor, ruined his clothes. By now, there were two officers sitting on his legs and body, while the other one banged his head repeatedly on the pavement. He was well and truly subdued.

There is a standard procedure in police practice, an essential piece of group power and mutual protection: if another officer is in trouble, you drop whatever you do and get there as rapidly as possible. There is no room for subtlety, no questions asked: when an officer puts out a 'shout' for help on his radio, it carries the short distance to his local station. At the same time as his sergeant can hear this, so can every other officer in the vicinity who keeps his own receiver on the open channel so that he knows what's happening on the rest of the patch. As soon as Castles put out his shout, every police driver within three miles turned on his siren and flashing light, put down his foot and sped to help his colleague in trouble. In every local station, the radio operator also has a land-line direct to Scotland Yard's emergency room, which he can open and relay the message to every officer within driving distance of the incident. Within thirty seconds of Castle's shout for help, over a hundred policemen were speeding excitedly towards Brockwell Park, unclear of what it was they had to deal with, but aware that it was urgent and probably dangerous. Dull it isn't.

Horace Parkinson wasn't happy about the situation he found himself in. He was dressed up and ready to go, but he couldn't find the girl he was looking for. He had a future to consider, he didn't want any trouble. Leaving the fair, he walked towards the car, noticed the scuffling round the door, and saw Lloyd James, whom he knew, being punched and choked. Parkinson too was carried by the crowd and he waved and shouted at the people who were pushing him off balance, telling them to stop. He was unable to get out of the crowd, unable to get into the car. He tried to walk round to the other door. When he had got around to the back of the motor, Castle waved his truncheon and lunged at him. Parkinson, who did weight lifting and judo in his spare time, the car mechanic who was studying to be a youth worker, did not retaliate. Instead he walked around the other side of the car, opened the door and tried to get in. 'Hold that one. Hold him', shouted Castles. Parkinson felt himself dragged by his white jacket back through the crowd and face-to-face with Constable Castle. 'If you struggle, you'll get it', he said, crashing down on his left arm with the truncheon. Instead, Parkinson stood still, made no attempt to struggle, shielded himself from the blows

and awaited his fate.

* * *

Within minutes of Horace Parkinson's arrest, word had spread through the crowd. He was well-known and popular locally through his involvement with St. Mathew's, and in the garbled form that the rumours spread through the milling throng, the stabbing of the white youth, the beating of Lloyd James, the St. John's Ambulance man hurrying across the road with his bag urgently over his shoulder, all combined to give an impression of violence and panic. As the first extra police cars arrived and screamed to a halt with their tyres squealing and sirens wailing, some of the youths started fighting back: bottles began to fly through the air, stones, pennies and clods of earth were hurled in the general direction of the police. A small group ran back into Brockwell Park and onto the flat roofs of the toilets, and it was from here that a bottle felled Detective Harry Tucker with a blow to his head that was later to put him into hospital for stitching. Frightened groups of girls, waiting for their boys to fetch cars, huddled together, while other boys, many of them still youngsters of 9 or 10, out with their elder brothers and sisters, tried to run for it.

Robin Sterling, his sisters and three friends came out of the fair as the fight was getting under way. Bottles flew over their heads from the toilet roof, so he sat down on a wall to watch what was happening. Next to him stood a businessman and his children; together they watched the fight. Carol and Maureen wanted to leave and go home: they got down from the wall and started to walk. But before Robin could join them, two police officers came over. 'That's one of them', said the younger of the two. 'No, he isn't,' said the other. 'But he'll do.' Without a struggle or word of protest, Sterling went meekly down to the van with the two officers.

Lloyd James ended up in the van, with DC Harper still giving him a beating. Then Horace Parkinson was thrown in and kept quiet by a simple threat of force. Outside he could hear the people shouting that he hadn't done anything. Once Robin Sterling was thrown into the van, by now protesting that he hadn't done anything, they were off on their way to the station.

By the minute, more police arrived, and joined the small knot of those who had formed themselves up in the middle of the crowd. In the absence of senior officers, some drew truncheons and pitched in with a will: eye witnesses recall parents shielding their youngsters from the sticks, boys dodging blows, at least three girls receiving hits on the arms and shoulders. Some managed to escape by running back through the crowd, or into the park or up Norwood Road, while others stood petrified, unable to believe their eyes.

When the police van arrived at Brixton police station, the door opened and Sterling was dragged out by his hair. He fell to the ground and was kicked and dragged into the police station. James followed, ducking to prevent himself from being hit by a police truncheon. Parkinson wasn't



Robin Sterling

so lucky and as he left the van he was hit forcefully on the head with a truncheon. They were all taken into the general office which was by now full of policemen. Harper started to punch Lloyd James who fell to the ground. He continued to kick him. Sterling was sobbing, 'I never did anything, I never did anything.' Castles shouted: 'Nigger, did you throw bottles?' Sterling replied: 'No', and Castles hit him with a truncheon until Sterling sobbed: 'Yes, he had done it.' Parkinson, who was semi-conscious, was kicked and beaten on the floor. Castles threatened that he would make sure they got a long time, and that he would pick Sterling up again. At this point a uniformed officer came over and said: 'That's enough.' They emptied their pockets, gave their names and addresses and were taken to separate cells. Horace Parkinson was visited in his cell by the police doctor who stitched the wound in his head. He didn't administer a local anaesthetic or shave the wound. None gave statements.

* * *

Mrs. Parkinson soon knew of her son's arrest: several people who had witnessed the event ran round to the house, half a mile from the Park, and informed her and Mr. Parkinson. Almost immediately, they agreed that she should go down to the police station and find out what was going on. It was the family's first brush with the law in their fifteen years in this country. They had heard stories about the police from some of the boys who called round for their sons, but neither had really had any contact with the police. They were worried about their son, but Mr. Parkinson recalls feeling that it couldn't have been very serious.

Mrs. Sterling heard about her son's arrest a few minutes later. After she had seen Robin taken away to the police van, Maureen had rushed to find a telephone and call her mother. Mrs. Sterling couldn't believe her ears and gathering her wits about her, she left a message and set off to cover the two and a half miles to Brixton.

Brixton police station is a modern, glass and concrete building imposingly located at the corner of Gresham and Brixton Roads. It looks deceptively open, but is in fact carefully constructed around the 'defensible space' principle. From the street, the front entrance and reception is clearly visible. Passers-by can look in and

see that justice is being done. It's reassuring if you live on the right side, daunting if the law lives on your wrong side. When Mrs. Parkinson got there at about 11.30 p.m., there was no one on duty at the front desk. Instead, she could hear a screaming coming from the corridor down to the side of the desk. With a shock of horror, she realised it was her boy, and throwing her caution aside, she burst through the door and started running down the corridor. As she got near to the room where the police were dealing with Horace, an officer came out and prevented her from going any further. 'No one's being beaten', he reassured her, but there was nothing he could tell a mother. She had recognised Horace's screams and it was a sound she will remember until she dies.

A few minutes later, Mrs. Sterling arrived at the station and demanded to see her boy. Again, there was no chance of her being allowed to. 'A youth has been stabbed, a policeman is unconscious in hospital, there might even be a murder charge,' said the man on the desk. 'There's no point in waiting, they haven't even been charged yet.' Eventually, Mrs. Sterling was allowed in to see Robin. She was weeping and Robin was in a terrible state. 'If you're not for us, then you're against us', philosophised the policemen who accompanied her.

Next morning, Mr. and Mrs. Parkinson visited a neighbour, Mrs. Harris, a social worker with the Brixton Neighbourhood Association. Together, they put through a call to Courtenay Laws, the Director, and explained the situation to him. Laws took it from there, and called in Rudy Narayan to defend the boys in court next morning. The two women then set off for Brixton police station. Mrs. Parkinson saw Horace there and was horrified: his head was still covered in blood from the truncheon blow, he was in great pain from the kicking he had received in the stomach and groin, his nice clothes were filthy and his head was throbbing with pain. 'Don't worry about it,' he told her, 'I've done nothing, I'm innocent, there's nothing to worry about.'

Mrs. James is a middle-aged woman who works in a canteen on a shift system. On Saturday night she came home tired. She saw Lloyd wasn't home and thought he had probably gone to the fair and then on to stay the night at his girlfriend's place — so she wasn't too concerned. The next day she heard about the fight at Brockwell Park from a friend of Lloyd's. She went to see two of her friends and they said that there had been a fight and that Lloyd had been there.

So she went to the police station. She told the desk officer that she heard there was fighting at Brockwell Park and asked if her son Lloyd James was arrested. The police officer said: 'Yes, he's here.' She asked why hadn't she been told her son was arrested and asked to see him. She was told she would have to wait until Monday morning before she could see him. 'When I finally saw him his mouth was swollen. I could see dried blood in his nose and he was holding a hanky that was covered in blood. I asked why he

looked like that. He said he had been beaten both at the Park and at the station, and my heart was too full to say anything.'

* * *

The three youths appeared at Camberwell Magistrate court on Monday, 11 June 1973, represented by Rudy Narayan. The charges were as follows: Horace Parkinson — Grievous bodily harm to Derek Castles and assaulting a police officer in the execution of his duty. Having in a public place an offensive weapon (a car jack). Lloyd James — Grievous bodily harm on Christopher Harper and assault on a police officer in execution of his duty. Robin Sterling — Unlawful wounding of Christopher Harper. Unlawful wounding of Derek Castles — assault causing grievous bodily harm to Tucker. Assault causing grievous bodily harm to Castles. Possessing an offensive weapon (a milk bottle).

At the hearing Parkinson and Sterling were granted bail (totalling £610) and were placed under an 11-hour curfew, from 8 p.m. until 7 a.m. Lloyd James was remanded in custody.

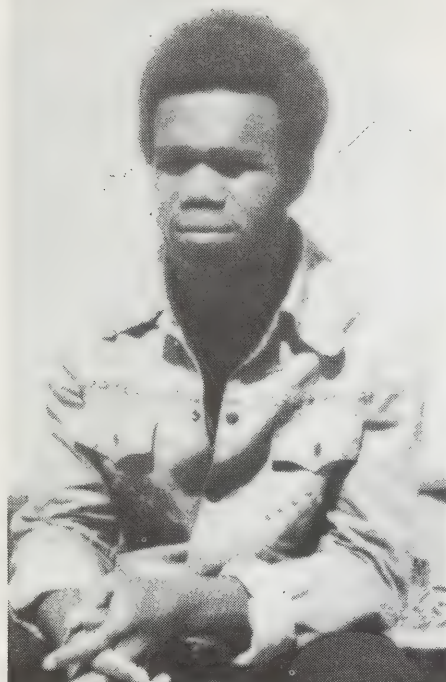
They appeared again at Camberwell Magistrate court on 20 June 1973. Lloyd James was allowed out on bail of £250 — and put under curfew. Parkinson had his curfew reduced because of his youth work and Sterling had his reduced because of his paper round. The police case was not ready.

The committal hearings finally took place at Wells' Street Magistrate court when the more serious charges of affray were added by the magistrate. The charge against Robin Sterling of the unlawful wounding of Harper was dropped. The defence asked for trial at the Old Bailey.

Within a fortnight, several youths had told of being pulled off buses and stopped. 'Were you at Brockwell Park? What did you see?' asked the police. The atmosphere of fear and hostility in Brixton was already fanned by a fortnight of Special Patrol Group terror: the forceful intervention of the SPGs in the eviction of squatters in Railton Road, which had resulted in the arrest of youth leader Ivan Madray, and rumoured armed entry into Sheperd's Youth Club — all combined to create an atmosphere of hostility in the area. Rudy Narayan, wearing his South London West Indian Association hat, said that there were five CID officers going around the area 'mugging black youths', a charge which was hotly denied by the police. But in the prevailing climate, it seemed a likely possibility to many.

* * *

After the immediate excitement of the arrests and the subsequent magistrate's court appearances, life returned to a semblance of normality for all three defendants. Lloyd James went back to work in the laundry and soon left because of the intolerable conditions. He reapplied for his old job making tailors' dummies. He was taken on again by the firm, but, eventually, he was sacked for taking off time to go and see the solicitors. Horace Parkinson continued to work part-time at St. Mathew's youth club and study for



Horace Parkinson (left). Did you see the incident? Horace's father distributing leaflets appealing for witnesses (right).

his ILEA Course. Robin went back to school and continued to study for his O levels. All of them were content to leave the handling of their case to the solicitors. James had been in trouble with the law before and he knew the score. He visited the solicitor, although with what degree of faith is not clear. Neither the Sterling family nor the Parkinson family had been in trouble with the law in the past. Sterling was supported to some extent by the Tulse Hill Students Group while Parkinson gained support from some of the youths in the club and its management. Each set of parents put absolute faith in their son's innocence, and in the ability of Rudy Narayan and Zac Harazi, barrister and solicitor, respectively, to handle the case. Lloyd spent much of his time round at his girl's room, who was now expecting his child. Robin and Horace were easy-going about their defence: witnesses were being interviewed at the Brixton Neighbourhood Association with Courtney Laws and Zac Harazi, but most of them refused to come forward and sign their statements for fear of being victimised by the police. Laws remembers going through twenty-one witnesses, of whom only six would sign. Harazi felt many of the statements were confused and he wanted something harder and clearer. There were persistent rumours that a group of youths, completely uninvolved with the fair, had in fact arrived in a car, jumped out and battled with the police with sticks and a car jack and jumped back in their car when the police arrived in force. The rumours were strong, but the eye-witnesses would not come forward for fear of themselves being implicated as substantial participants. All the way through, between June and the Old Bailey, both the Parkinson and Sterling families had so much faith in their sons' innocence that they left it to the solicitor and Neighbourhood Association to organise the trial.

The police, however, were better prepared. After the defence's decision to go for the Old Bailey instead of Croydon Crown Court, police witnesses were readied, colour photographs of the injuries were obtained, and a new local Community Liaison Officer came in to take up his duties. Much press office effort was put into publicising the police attempts at remodelling their community relations programmes, with remarkable cooperation from the local black elite. In November, Rudy Narayan hosted Commander Marshall, the new Scotland Yard Community Relations chief, to a welcome party at the Coach and Horses in Brixton, while *West Indian World* greeted with pleasure the acceptance of half a dozen black police cadets into the force. On the other hand, the students at Tulse Hill began agitating on behalf of the youths. The black community was polarised. Quietly and ironically, the black youth who had done the original stabbing outside the fish and chip shop pleaded guilty and was fined £5.

On 4 March 1974 the trial began at the Old Bailey before an all-white jury. It lasted for nine days. The defending barristers were Arnold Rosen for Horace Parkinson, Ron Rose for Lloyd James and Harry Narayan for Robin Sterling. The line pursued by the defence was left to each barrister's discretion: On the first day Arnold Rosen failed to appear and a substitute took over who was not briefed on the case. (This occurred again on another day of the trial.)

The prosecution case was put effectively. Eighteen policemen gave evidence to the effect that a riot had broken out; that Lloyd James had attacked Harper and had to be forcefully restrained; that Horace Parkinson, in going to James' assistance, had hit Castles with a car jack, and that Robin Sterling was on the wall throwing bottles, two of which wounded Castles and Tucker. Vivid colour photographs of the wounds inflicted at the

incident were exhibited. Castles told the jury that the incident was the most terrifying he had ever been involved in during his 25 years service and that he had had to be prematurely retired from the police force because of his injuries. In fact, he had done his 25 years service and was due for retirement anyway. He now works as a security officer.

The defence for Lloyd James was that he was acting in self-defence; that he had been attacked first, by Harper who knew him anyway, and that the police were lying. He gave details of his beating at the police station. His barrister accused the police of inciting the whole incident.

Sterling and Parkinson's defence was a denial of all charges — they had done none of the things they were accused of. The treatment they received at police hands was never brought up. Parkinson had a photograph of his wounded head which was never submitted — on the advice of the solicitor, presumably because it would 'tarnish his image'. They did not attack the policing. Emphasis was laid on the character of the boys. One witness was called on behalf of Lloyd James. Two were called for Robin Sterling — his sister Maureen and a friend, Michael Hamilton, who had been with him at the fair. Horace Parkinson called the owner of the car, who said that Parkinson could not have taken the car jack from its boot as it was locked. His brother was called. An affidavit was read from Rev. Bob Nind as to Horace's work with the youth and character.

Unlike earlier trials of the Mangrove Nine, the Metro Four and the Oval Four, the defence was played at a low key. The political groups, themselves in a state of flux throughout the period of the trial, had no direct lines of involvement with the three. Sterling was too young to know the score, Parkinson was involved in the youth work and social services scene, and Lloyd James' hustler friends were too wary to get involved.

It took the Jury just over two hours to find the three guilty. Judge Abdela then pronounced sentences of three years each upon them. The defendants, their families and friends were stunned.

* * *

Judge Abdela called Robin Sterling back to review his sentence and agreed to hear a plea of mitigation on his behalf from Rudy Narayan, who called Court-enay Laws of the Brixton Neighbourhood Community Association and Chief Inspector Owen Kelly, Community Liaison officer for Brixton.

Mr. Laws said that as a result of this boy's case, community relations had changed slightly. There was tremendous pressure on people who worked to maintain a balance in the community, and, especially in the past few days, a certain air of disquietness was noticeable. He hoped the Judge would consider the feeling of people like himself in the community.

Chief Inspector Kelly stated that until the affray — which was not typical of Brixton — the atmosphere had been generally good. But tension had increased since.

In his plea, Mr. Narayan, prospective Labour Party candidate for the Lambeth Council, said that sometimes the courts had a chance to reach out into the community and bring unity in place of division. In this boy's case the court could do more than just find a balance. There was a chance to indicate by the sentence that this could be a proper case for assisting the community to move together — a case for demonstrating conciliation and generosity. The incident was last summer and perhaps Brixton, on its recent record, deserved the chance as a community for the court to make a positive contribution towards the growth of the improved community relationship. There was still time to build up hope rather than despair.

The Judge replied that he had to ask himself what the situation would be if

there was no conflict between communities and no organisation where relationships had to be harmonised. 'I take Robin Sterling or young Tom Smith from Somewhere. It matters not, does it, whether he is Christian, Jew or Mohammedan, black, white or yellow or anything? I have to take him as he is — a young boy of hitherto good character and background. I have to regard all these matters. But you are inviting me really to say that I should go further than that and, in a spirit of conciliation with the community and as an act of generosity, alter the sentences I thought were proper. One of the troubles is that whatever the nature of the individual — whatever race, religion or creed — there is good and bad in all communities. We have to try to seek out the good from the bad.'

Mr. Narayan replied that a term of imprisonment might be counter-productive, not only in respect of the boy. Rather than having him in closed walls, let him slog away at repairing some of the damage he had done in Brixton — let him go back to Brixton and work for three years — if necessary — in the field of community relations. Damage to Brixton? But Robin Sterling's defence was that he was framed.

The Judge ruled that the sentence should stand.

* * *

On 20 March the first community meeting took place. Held at Brixton Town Hall, it was attended by the boys' parents, and social and community workers in Brixton. Seventy people attended and a fund was launched to raise the £1,000 needed for an appeal. From the meeting nine people active in Brixton came forward to stand as sureties for bail. They also formed a permanent committee to help in the campaign to free the boys. Horace Parkinson's father told the meeting that he had received a letter from his son in Wormwood Scrubs sending greetings 'to all my brothers and sisters in



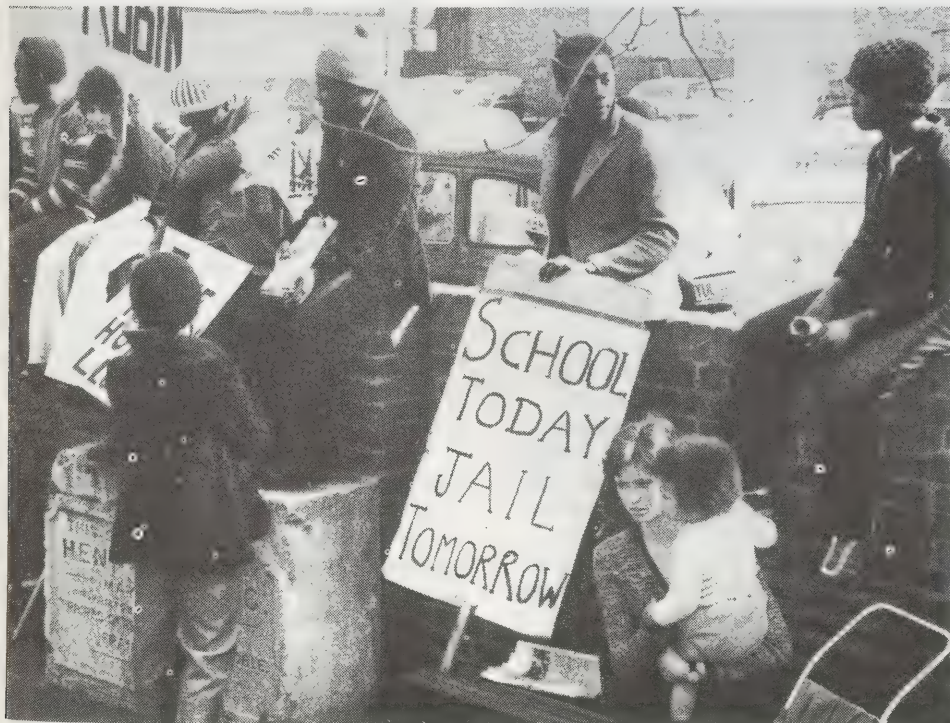
Brixton'. He went on: 'Horace also asked me to tell you that he does not want anyone to get into conflict with the police on his account. I know my son is innocent. He is only 19, but he is taking it like a man. We are going to get him free, no matter what it costs or how long it takes.' £338 was raised from the meeting. The issue of mobilising the community for a public show of strength was not raised.

On Wednesday, 27 March the school population came onto the stage. A meeting called by the Tulse Hill Students' Collective was held at the Gresham Centre. Over seventy school children from all schools in the area, aged from 9 to 17 years, came.

The meeting was tense. A platform speaker began by outlining what had taken place on 9 June 1973 at Brockwell Park. Accusing the police of escalating the incident into one of confrontation, he called on the community to show that they would not stand by and let the brothers go down. He outlined ways in which the community could be mobilized and what could be done. Tulse Hill had so far raised £100 in their school for the three and urged other school children to do the same in theirs. A demonstration had already been called for the following Saturday, 30 March, and he asked for all present to attend, and to encourage others to come on. He said that all pupils had to be informed of the case, that students should stop other students and talk to them, asking if they knew of the case. It was finally agreed that a committee would be formed from the meeting where the strike and other actions would be planned. The committee was called the Black Students' Action Collective.

* * *

Saturday 30 March saw the first mass mobilisation. Some 500 people, approximately half of them white, assembled in Brockwell Park and marched down Railton Road and round Brixton. At the end of the demonstration, the speakers stood next to a bust of Sir Henry Tate, 'merchant and philanthropist' — the original Tate of Tate & Lyle, whose efficient exploitation of black workers in the Caribbean and white workers in Liverpool



The demonstrators end up outside the Tate Library in Brixton.



A hundred pupils climbed over the fence of Tulse Hill School to join the school strike on 3 April.



The 30 March demonstration passed Brixton police station. There was quiet anger.

had enabled him to amass a large fortune and 'donate' four libraries to South London boroughs. Addressing his fellow merchants and councillors at the end of the nineteenth century, he had pointed out: 'Knowledge is power. Free libraries and reading rooms in Lambeth, fellow tradesmen. You will gain more trade and better customers when people use reading rooms and libraries.' Beneath the bust of this man, the students went through the facts of the case, pointed out the political importance of the refusal by youth to work and called for support for the school strike and the further mobilisations. They also stressed the importance of the call for witnesses of the original incident. The demonstration was at an end. It had managed to be both angry and good-natured.

The school strike took place on 3 April. Nearly 1,000 pupils came out. The majority were black from schools in South London — but the National Union of School Students mobilized pupils from schools throughout London. For many of the black kids it was the first time they had ever been on a demonstration. It began with a rally in Kennington Park and then, led by Tulse Hill students, the march went on a long route via Camberwell Green Magistrate court, Brixton police station and Tulse Hill school and on to Brockwell Park. The demonstration stopped outside Tulse Hill school. It was lunchtime and most of the pupils who had remained at school were in the playground. The demonstration started to chant: 'Come and join us, come and join us' to their friends in the playground.

About 100 climbed over the fence and joined the demonstration — as each climbed over and reached the other side of the fence, he was greeted by cheers from the demonstrators.

Speakers addressed the march — all commended the turn out. Rene Webb — a youth worker — said how good it made him feel to see so many young people out in support of their brothers. Other speakers included Mrs. Parkinson and representatives from other organisations.

The crowd then dispersed. After the strike, representatives from the Black Students' Action Collective were taken by Paul Stephenson (a governor of Tulse Hill and a Youth Officer with the Community Relations Commission) to hand in a letter of protest to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street. He then took them to the House of Commons where he spoke to David Ennals about the case.

* * *

As we go to press, Lloyd James, Robin Sterling and Horace Parkinson have done six weeks of their three years behind bars. It has started hard for them. Sterling is in Ashford Remand Home, taking old telephones to pieces for the Post Office when he should be studying for 'O' Levels. Parkinson is in Wormwood Scrubs, unable to study for the two exams he needs to become a youth worker. James is in Wormwood Scrubs too, worrying about the child he won't see for three years.

On the streets of Brixton, the students and the social organisers issue leaflets, appeal for witnesses, call demonstrations and put in the work leading up to the appeal. The defence solicitors appear at last to have the bit between their teeth. The Black Peoples' Defence Committee has been resuscitated. The social workers, vicars and lawyers meet as The Nine every week and keep an eye out for future cases. The police sit in the station, keeping a wary eye on the situation and study catalogues of riot-control equipment. The same people who run the community relations set-up are busy organising the campaign to get Rudy Narayan into the local council and from there to Parliament. Yet some fundamental questions have been posed.

Firstly, there can be no doubt that the three people convicted from the Brockwell Park outburst are not guilty as charged. That night's activities represented a strong and collective response to the years of police activity and harassment that was a part of everybody's day-to-day experience. We have detailed a few of the publicly known incidents — the Special Patrol Group and the Lynton Johnson case are just two of the better known — but for each one that reaches the open air, there are a hundred private experiences with the police that are never publicised. The Brockwell Park incident was a collective response to the years of repression.

Secondly, the whole conduct of the defence has to be examined. We understand that barristers were changed several times during the actual course of the trial. That Arnold Rosen did not appear at all on two days. That barristers were

THE BLACK PRISONER

a subjective view by Ron Phillips

The author presented the following as a paper at the TRJ conference on 'Racism and the Law Enforcement Agencies' in August 1973.



'The prison is both an instrument of social control, and a symbol of legitimate coercion on the part of the state.'*

Many of the present generation of Britain's local prisons were built during a period of continued and sometimes intense social unrest, which accompanied the urban industrial development of the late nineteenth century.

Their deliberate siting in what were then (and in many cases still are) working-class districts, powerfully suggests that a major purpose of their erection was to act as a daily reminder for the urban working classes of the state's ability to deprive a large number of individuals of their liberty, and, until the abolition of capital punishment, even of their lives.

Throughout its long history of savage and unrelenting class war, prisons, and often the men in them, stood close to the turbulent heart of Britain's economic and social relations. From Chartism to the General Strike, from the Women's Rights Campaign to the Industrial Relations Bill, British prisons have steadily performed their role of political repression. For more than a hundred years, today's massive smoke-blackened walls have brooded over their surrounding landscape of terraced houses, existing not only to prevent the escape of those inside, but, perhaps more importantly, to invest the institution with a carefully maintained air of mystery and terror, which entered deeply into the proletarian consciousness.

With the possible exception of the 'lunatic asylum', no institution has gripped the British imagination with such intensity. There is a finality about going to prison. A career is 'ruined' by imprisonment. (Not merely interrupted.) The most dire warning to erring youth is still centred on that other world behind the wall. 'You'll end up in jail' took on some of the dreadful aura of 'You'll end up on the gallows', even after the termination of public execution.

The fear was justified. For no one ever really returned from a prison. A soldier, after many years of separation, came back to become a publican or a carpenter. A sailor stopped being a sailor and became a mechanic or a shopkeeper. A convict remained a convict to the end of his days, investing, moreover, his family and his relations with his stigma which acquired a permanency not associated with any other social experience. The official treatment of prisoners' wives and families remains a national scandal. In a surprising number of cases families find it sensible, sometimes necessary, to behave as though the prisoner is dead.

Centrepont and the modern office block have dramatically altered the post-war town scape. But for the greater part of their industrial life, the majority of British cities have been physically dominated by four institutions, the factory, the cathedral, the town hall, and the

prison. The factory provided for the majority of the population, the reason for living, as well as the practical boundaries of life. The church sought to instill those virtues of honest and patient industry which, together with habits of sobriety and humility, ensured a pliable and disciplined work-force. The town hall celebrated the power and corporate pride of those who owned the factory. The prison was intended to contain those who could not, or would not, cooperate in the social contract delineated by the other three.

'The penitentiary', says Angela Davis, 'was projected as the locale for doing penance for an offence against society, the physical and spiritual purging of proclivities to challenge rules and regulations which command total obedience. While cloaking itself with the bourgeois aura of universality, imprisonment was supposed to cut across all class domination, the institution has in reality operated as a means of prohibiting the have nots from encroaching upon the haves.'

Prison and the Controlled Society

The relation of absolute power/powerlessness in which the prison officer stands to the prisoner, mirrors more or less exactly relations of power within the larger society outside the wall and illuminates certain aspects of the way that Britain's population is controlled by its dominant interest groups.

The introduction of the Du Cane system, the acceptance of the infamous Mountbatten Report, the increase in prison building and the recent 'tightening' of security carried out by the present Home Secretary, are all examples of a reversal of liberalisation in prison regimes, which occurred at a time of rising social or industrial unrest. Again, many of those people who are shocked to discover that prisoners have no right to privacy, would be even more shocked to learn that *no one in Britain has any legal right to privacy*.

Thus, the prison can be seen as a microcosm of a controlled society. Apart from existing as an instrument of large scale intimidation, the prison, by its own assessment as an institution, is intended as a reorientation course for those individuals whose behaviour other agencies of the state, the police and the courts, have defined as unsuitable for the maintenance of capitalist economic and social relations.

'The purpose of the training and treatment of convicted prisoners, shall be to establish in them, the will to lead a good and useful life on discharge and fit them to do so.' (Home Office)

Socialisation and Coercion

In practice, this implies a socialisation of the prisoner towards an acceptance of his place in society, as determined by

others, since he himself is by definition unfitted to say what constitutes a 'good and useful life'. The degree of coercion applied to the accomplishment of this task, depends in the end upon the prevailing social climate, and upon the extent to which reformist pressures can be brought to bear on those who are in direct control of the institution. But the basic task of the prison officer remains:

1. The punishment and containment of the prisoner;
2. the reorientation of the prisoner towards an acceptable norm of behaviour.

Where such reorientation/socialisation cannot readily be achieved by personality adjustments of the prisoner himself, the tendency of the institution — whatever its stated intention might be — is to escalate the coercive power against the prisoner. The threat and/or use of physical violence, upon which the whole apparatus rests, the application of mental pressure, by solitary confinement, the creation of anxiety states by withdrawal of privileges (extra letters, welfare visits, parole applications) may all contribute to the more or less rapid deterioration of the prisoner, and even to his elimination as a functioning person.

The organisation of the institution ensures that no outside interest can establish by independent examination the sequence of events which led to a death caused by injuries 'sustained during a fall'. No investigation can reveal the course of events which led to David Oluwale being the kind of personality he was reduced to.

The black prisoner in a British prison cannot be socialised in reality away from that feature which a racist society has defined as his most offensive attribute — his blackness — as a result of which he finds himself in a position of extreme danger.

A rise in the level of racial hostility on the outside, finds its counterpart focussed and intensified inside. The black prisoner therefore comes under ever increasing pressure to display a deeper and deeper rejection of himself, a more and more obvious acceptance of his own inferiority. But finally, there is no safety in this course, because he can only achieve this by deserting reality completely. Besides, in that harder world, the meek can only expect to inherit a measured six feet of the earth.

The alternative can only be to revolt against the obscenity of imprisonment, born at first of desperation, and expressed in sometimes suicidal acts of individual courage and defiance. Perhaps this is one significant feature of the fact that at Parkhurst and at Camp Hill, at Brixton and at Gartree, blacks have been in the forefront of the recent spasms of retaliatory violence against their custodians, of roof-top climbing and slate hurling. Later will come political consciousness, and the beginnings of the organisation of revolt.

The Prisoner

On 21 August 1971, George Jackson died under the guns of a prison system which expected that his mighty voice would then be still. But Huey Newton said: 'He inspired prisoners, whom I later encountered, to put his ideas into practice and so his spirit became a living thing. Today I say that although his body has fallen, his spirit goes on, because his ideas live.'

Within the British prison system, there are more and more young blacks seeking to 'put his ideas into practice, and so make his spirit a living thing'.

In spite of the powerful feelings aroused by the prison in this society, British literature has produced no great classic with imprisonment as its theme.

Discussing this phenomenon, Vince Taylor, a black English veteran of the Korean war, who had first been captured and imprisoned by the Chinese, and then by his not-so-grateful white compatriots on his return to civilian life, articulated what many of us ex-prisoners feel:

You can divide people into two kinds — those who know what it is to be locked up, and those who don't.

The two kinds of people can pretend that they are communicating, but there is really no way that the ex-prisoner can explain what he has been through. However much detail you put into your description, you can never convey the reality. You get to thinking, what's the use. In a sense it is like trying to tell people about being in action, under fire, with men dying all around you. You find yourself editing, quite deliberately, because there is such a deep fear associated with the whole idea, that people's minds reject much of what you say. In the end you let it go. You see, in order to survive a man has to make adjustments which take you beyond what the other person can conceive.

This view would not seem unreasonable if one takes the trouble to consider the vast literature which has been devoted to revealing the effects of 'deprivation' and 'alienation' in this society. Even though they share the same streets, the same access to public facilities, the same basic cultural assumptions, it is still, more often than not, impossible for people to communicate across the barriers of class experience. Slowly, we are being forced to face the possibility that communication across the barriers of racial experience may well be totally impossible.

In every society, the basic social arrangement is the organisation of productive effort. The nature of the individual's existence is determined by the part he plays in that process. His movement through time and space is structured by the demands of his work, as are his relations with other people. Most people in a western industrial society tend to work, sleep or find recreation in different places. Patterns of activity and habits of thought are built up to provide reassurance and stability for the individual. Ways of adjusting to small changes in pattern are worked out, but more important

alterations in the physical or social environment (change of job, or home, divorce or loss of a friend) can produce massive dislocation in the personality and behaviour of an individual.

For the vast majority of prisoners, the shock of being 'weighed off' (sentenced) imposes a shattering change upon all the patterns simultaneously.

'The very first time', says George Jackson, 'it was like dying.'

The value of an hour changes, and all the apparatus built up over the years for dealing with the passage of time suddenly becomes obsolete. In normal life, few hours are entirely without incident or interest. In prison, many hours are entirely without incident or interest. In prison, many hours might pass, in which nothing happens. It becomes possible to look at a clock without receiving any information from it. It is not that time becomes irrelevant. In a sense it becomes more important, for in the end, that is what it's all about. No. It is merely that measured as the outside world measures it, time becomes intolerable. The prisoner has to learn how to deal with the passage of time in a different way.

The power of decision suddenly disappears, for anything which happens to the prisoner, including the most personal functions, happens because or when someone else decides that it should. And with it goes the illusion of control over the personal destiny. The prisoner is all at once assailed by a realisation of his own impotence.

The Admission Procedure

Admission to a prison is a complicated procedure requiring an entire reception wing, usually separated from the rest of the prison by some distance. The core of this ritual, which usually occupies some hours, is called 'stripping'. The term describes very precisely what happens to the man.

Each batch of prisoners brought into the prison by the police, shackled in twos, is handed over to the officer in charge of reception. Each prisoner is locked in one of a series of 'boxes' (about the size of an old fashioned privy) to await his turn for stripping. When it comes he is unlocked and taken to a large table where two reception officers, attended by a prisoner clerk and several prisoner orderlies, take his particulars and process him.

In a stupor of tiredness and boredom, the prisoner makes his initial contact with his custodians, and it is at this point that the black prisoner will often receive his first intimation of what lies ahead.

The writer was one of three black men, admitted in a batch of about twenty-six, to Strangeways in Manchester. None of the three were left in any doubt as to where they were to stand in the prison's hierarchy.

'Name!' bawled the reception officer.
'Gordon James.'
'Gordon James, What?'
'Gordon James, man, just Gordon James.'

'Not just Gordon James you stupid black twat! Gordon James, Sir!'

'Gordon James sir.'
'What religion James?'
'Church of God.'

'Church of God? What the fucking hell's that?'

'Well sir, it's . . .'

'Don't tell me what it is! I don't want to know what it is! You've got no religion! You're a fucking Moss Side Ponce! That's your fucking religion . . . We got hundreds of you bastards in here . . . every one a fucking ponce! It's a fucking religion with you blokes. If I had my way, I wouldn't nick you, I'd fucking well top the lot of you! While you're here you'll be Church of England and like it! Empty your pockets!'

The contents were laboriously written by hand into a huge ledger.

'Get your clothes off and stand on that scale over there.'

Each article of clothing was recorded as it came off, and prisoner orderlies packed them away in cardboard boxes. Stark naked, the prisoner signs the ledger and walks over to stand on the scale where he is weighed and measured by a prisoner orderly, then through to the bath house. After a bath he is issued with his prison clothing and kit. Then he waits in another room until the whole batch has been processed.

Generally, medical examination is done on the following day. But sometimes on the morning of admission, the men form a line to be inspected by the doctor.

'Next!'

'Stand still there! Drop your trousers.'

'Any illness?' says the doctor. 'Cough', says the doctor, taking hold of the prisoner's scrotum.

'Right', says the doctor, 'turn round and bend over.'

He inspects the prisoner's anus with the aid of a small light.

'Right,' says the doctor, 'next. That's it.'

For one thoughtful and articulate man who took part in a television documentary about prisons, this reception drill was the hardest part of his sentence to endure. So much so, that after serving a number of years, he refused to go home for a week-end leave because he felt that he could not face the humiliation of the reception. He preferred to finish his sentence, and then leave for good. Everything that made him a person, a man, his dignity, his name, his possessions, his self respect, was taken away from him.

Fortunately for them, the majority of prisoners are at that moment, too dazed, too tired, too confused to react very strongly to stripping and reception. A

larger number of men are hit by the full realisation of imprisonment only after they have been marched with their kit to the main prison, lined up and counted on the 'center', then allocated to a cell on one of the wings radiating from that sacred spot. (The radial wing design, following Haviland's Philadelphia model of 1829, allows a single officer to stand on the centre and survey all the cell doors of each wing in turn. In this prison, it is counted as a serious offence for a prisoner to stand or walk on the grille marking the exact spot.)

And then few sounds can be more heart stopping than the noise made by the closing of a cell door. It is a sound which can neither be described nor duplicated. That sound is the final denial of a secret appeal to magic. Up to this point, some corner of the imagination has nurtured the faint suspicion that the court will have discovered its mistake, that the judge will have relented, that the bus taking this batch to the jail would crash, allowing all the prisoners to escape in the confusion. The sound of a cell door closing banishes these fantasies. With the closing of the door, the prisoner knows that he has ceased to be a father, a brother, a husband or a son; from now on he is a prisoner.

Until the new prisoner can be placed in a workshop, he is likely to spend the day and the night, with the exception of one hour for exercise, 'banged up' in the cell. In most local prisons, men are locked up three to a cell. With a once-weekly bath, and prison clothing which may have been worn for some time by a previous prisoner and then reissued without cleaning, the air in a cell can become unbelievably foul.

This problem of keeping clean, continues to be a serious one throughout the sentence. The Home Office rules that 'arrangements shall be made for every prisoner to wash at all proper times, to have a hot bath at least once a week, and for men to shave or be shaved daily, and to have their hair cut as required.' But because of overcrowding, even the minimal one bath per week is not always achieved. Shirts, socks and underwear can only be changed at the bath house. Therefore a prisoner is at an acute disadvantage in any confrontation with a smartly-dressed prison officer, since in his badly fitting outer garments and soiled underwear, he is nearly always unkempt and smelly. Black prisoners tend to suffer more than whites, since standards of personal hygiene are usually higher among black prisoners. Moreover, both white prisoners and officers are quick to point out any defects in this area. 'What makes you bastards stink so much?'

Black Prisoners in British Jails

It is impossible to tell accurately, how many of Britain's 41,000 prisoners are



Attica State Prison, New York – Prisoner confrontation

black. The best that one can do at this point is to rely on general impressions drawn from conversations from other prisoners and from visual observation.

Certainly the location of the prison will determine its ethnic composition. Risley, a remand prison serving Liverpool and Manchester, would appear to accommodate about 10 per cent black prisoners. Strangeways, where visual observation of the Saturday film show (a high point of the prison week – few men miss it) and the two Sunday services, as well as many conversations with black Manchester ex-prisoners, appears to contain a steady 20 per cent. Lincoln would have less than 1 per cent, and Durham about 5 per cent. Walton in Liverpool, Brixton, and Winston Green in Birmingham, are thought to have about the same as Manchester; but at Stafford, a regional 'training prison', where they maintain a *de facto* segregation, the majority of blacks being housed in the 'Crescent Wing', the proportion of blacks rises to about 25 per cent.

At least in the major urban prisons, the proportion of blacks stands very much higher than the proportion of blacks within the total society would lead one to expect.

If this conclusion can, at least for the sake of argument, be accepted, since then the Morris's found about 2 per cent of blacks in all categories (Asians, West Indians, and black English) at Pentonville in the late 1950s, an impressive rise in black criminality, over the last fifteen years, must be postulated. But virtually all the Chief Constables of areas where blacks live have gone on record, before the Community Relations Commission for

example, saying that, with the possible exception of the young English blacks, our communities were easily the most law-abiding in the country. At virtually every trial of a black political activist, the prosecution has contrasted the behaviour (and opinions) of the accused with that of 'the majority of our law-abiding coloured citizens'.

The immigration legislation of the last two decades has ensured that the rise in the number of black prisoners does not reflect an absolute rise in the number of blacks in Britain.

Nor does it appear to reflect a rise in the number of young blacks in prisons. Because even if more young blacks are being sent down, they would not be found in the adult section of the prison, with which this paper is concerned.

There are certain questions which need answering. These include:

1. Is the proportion of black prisoners higher than the proportion of blacks outside?
2. Does this indicate that blacks are being specifically selected for imprisonment?
3. Is the proportion of blacks in particular prisons higher than the proportion of blacks throughout the prison system?
4. Does this indicate that blacks are being concentrated in particular prisons?
5. Why?

In some sections of the black community the answers are already known. We believe that blacks are being selected for imprisonment, are being concentrated in particular prisons, and are being subjected to harsher treatment than other sections of the working class.

The reasons can be found partly in the entrenched racism of all British institutions. But set against the consideration that this system is fighting desperately to maintain its integrity in the face of several very deep crises thrown up by its inherent contradictions, even more terrible possibilities must be faced within a nation which is being carefully schooled to the acceptance of repressive violence, against the I.R.A., the letter bombers, the anarchists.

The analysis of our own experience, the development of strategies of defence, properly belongs to the black community. In this case the primary tasks can only be carried out by groups of prisoners in the jail, and ex-prisoners outside. Some evidence exists that in the areas of political education and the organisation of ex-prisoners' groups, work has already begun.

The primary task of those enemies and opponents of capitalism and its increasingly possible development, the British fascist state is to begin the work of creating a climate in which the growth of a viable and vigorous opposition to racism within the prison system can become a reality.

Black 'Crime' – Police Assault

The possibility of any serious support for a struggle by black prisoners against the racism of the prison has to be based on an analysis of the kind of man who is being sent to prison. Again, we are hampered by a lack of reliable information, and must depend upon personal impressions, and a consensus between ex-prisoners. But even at this level, some significant differences appear between black and white prisoners.

Among white prisoners, a group of black ex-prisoners felt the largest category to be offenders against property without violence. This would include petty theft, shop lifting, stealing from work places and industrial installations.

Offences against property, with violence, would be the next in importance and would include offences against both persons and property: burglary, house breaking, robbery with violence.

Cases of common assault and assault causing more serious injury would come high on the list, as would cases of failure to maintain, usually brought by the Department of Health and Social Security. Motoring offences bring in quite a number, although most prisoners do not regard them as much more than bad luck. Paper crimes, such as forgery and fraud, are comparatively rare, as are cases of police assault. Murder and attempted murder is very unusual and lifers face a different order of problem anyway.

The majority of white prisoners would seem to be first or second offenders from the lowest of the white income groups. Most have an irregular work pattern, and would tend to subsist on petty thefts in between jobs. Many would, to some extent, be institutionalised by experience in children's homes, borstals and so on. The largest part of these would be in their early twenties.

Black prisoners would tend to be slightly older, married, or in a stable cohabitation. The average black prisoner would have worked at the same job for some years, and would have lived in the same town for quite a while. These would include West Indians, Pakistanis, and Indians.

The second largest group would be the brothers on the block, whose way of life would bring them into regular contact with the police. This group would be almost exclusively West Indian, with a distinctive style which marks them off from the more stable worker.

Unlike the white prisoners, a great many black prisoners, particularly the West Indians, would have convictions for assaulting the police. Often it is the addition of that extra charge which secures a conviction. So many of these charges originate in domestic or commercial disputes, that it perhaps worth noting a number of cases which involved black prisoners from the Midlands.

1. Henry (29, West Indian, Birmingham) 9 months for disturbing the peace and police assault. Henry became involved in an argument with a shop assistant while trying to collect his overalls from the laundry. The assistant called the police, who threw Henry out of the shop, beat him up, and charged him. Henry was undefended at court.

2. A soldier (23, West Indian, Birmingham) 3 years for abduction and rape. Visited Manchester while on discharge

leave from the Army. Two girls (white) accompanied him on the train back home, and stayed for a week. They returned to Manchester under their own steam and claimed that he kept them there against their will.

3. Jimmy (30, West Indian, Wolverhampton) 18 months for assault with intent, causing an affray, police assault. Jimmy started a fight with a clerk at the Social Security office, after having been refused benefit.

4. Bryan (32, West Indian, Stoke-on-Trent) 2 years for grievous bodily harm and police assault. Beat his wife in a domestic altercation.

5. Chambers (29) stopped by police on his way to work, in mistake for someone else. Chambers argued, and was arrested. Discovered at the police station that he was the wrong man. But by this time, he had been charged with police assault.

6. James (Manchester) 6 months for failure to maintain and police assault. Prosecution initiated by the Social Security office. Refused to go quietly. Argued that his wife was in the wrong.

7. Pee-wee (29, West Indian, Nottingham) 9 months for possession of cannabis and police assault. He finished early stint on night shift at nine. Dropped in on a party and got caught in a police raid. Claims police grabbed whoever they could get hold of, and charged the lot with the same offence.

8. Melvin (33, West Indian) 2 years. Only black family in his street. Neighbour slapped one of his children for throwing a milk bottle over the wall. Melvin punched him and broke his jaw. Melvin's wife also arrested as well in the ensuing affray.

9. Chaudry (35, Birmingham) 9 months for assault with a deadly weapon. He went to police station to seek advice as to how to deal with an awkward tenant. 'Throw him out', said the police, 'but let us know when you are about to do so.' Fight started, and police arrested both on police assault charge.

Other differences between the pattern of white conviction and black conviction can be spelled out. Few blacks are convicted, for instance, of sexual assault upon children, although a number have been sent to prison for beating their own children. Fewer blacks than whites seem to go to prison for stealing from employers. Fewer blacks take to house breaking. In fact, only the Indians seem to be involved to any extent with acquisitive crime, and many of these men are already comparatively well off.

A Culture of Violence

The West Indians, Pakistanis, and the black English, adopt the stance of victims rather than aggressors. They arrive in the prison mainly by virtue of what someone else has done to them, rather than as a

result of what they have done to someone else. True, black convictions are much concerned with violence. But the major sufferers from black violence are still ourselves, our women and our children. True, blacks are always accused of violence when the matter comes before a court. But so often the accusation is made to prevent us from revealing the extent to which we are the recipients of violence.

In prison the violence is nearer to the surface. The constant shouting and constant verbal aggression of the prison officers effectively conceals the fact that they are always in the minority.

Physically, there is no reason why 300 should not be quickly overpowered by 1,000, therefore the threat of immediate and personal violence has to be kept in evidence to assure the prisoner that no individual infringement of the routine will go unpunished. As the prisoner internalises this lesson, the need for its open advertisement grows less. Hence the very hint of an attack upon a prison officer is punished with the utmost severity. But this society has a culture of violence and, for many prisoners, the agony of frustration which becomes a part of prison life can only be relieved in a spasm of violence. Not only is there a high incidence of individual fights, but more organised directed violence for commercial ends is an accepted part of the prison's life.

Fights between prisoners are rarely headed off. It is simply more in the interest of the prison officers' authority to allow a fight to build up, watch it carefully to make sure it does not spread, then to summon help and batter both contestants into submission. The penalties are severe. Solitary confinement, loss of remission, or even the chance of being permanently injured by a truncheon.

Yet so deep is the consciousness of alienation that a sense of self can only be reclaimed within the walls, by Fanon's catharsis of violence, and men are impelled each day to seek that release. As the level of social frustration in the larger society is transmitted by a thousand capillaries to prisoners, the institution will find it more and more necessary to manage and direct this well of violence away from itself, and on to a target which its racism has already defined. The portents are that it is already adjusting itself to facilitate this end.

The challenge to the black prisoner is now, to find so resolute a commitment to survival, construct so impregnable a defence, that the unplumbable well of frustration and anger will be turned to the direction of its proper target, the institution itself. If this short paper throws anything into the debate, let it be this: the black prisoner cannot perform that task on his own.

Our task is not only to try to understand, but to find ways of helping him to survive.

A Chilean worker, now in exile in Argentina, describes his experiences as a factory worker in the months leading up to the September 1973 coup. (Taken from Peoples' Translation Services.)

The last union meeting we held at the foundry before the coup was impressive. It was sort of a sequel to an assembly which the management had called several days before to inform us that our stock raw material was down to zero, that with the truck owners' strike there was no way of withdrawing the stock of ingots reserved for us in Concepción, and that we'd have to seriously consider the prospect of having to paralyse production. The news was badly received — first of all, because the administration had waited until the last minute to inform us how critical the situation was; second, because this meant passively submitting to the conditions which the right-wing 'owners' strike' was imposing; thirdly, because we'd broken all production records the previous month and had a great number of urgent pieces to cast in the days to come.

The Production Committee met immediately afterwards and in the subsequent discussions unanimity was quickly obtained; nobody except the workers of this plant was going to stop production; neither the truck owners, nor the shop owners, nor the doctors, nor the professional people were going to tell us what to do. The only ones who were going to decide the day and the hour that production was to cease were the workers who produce. We'd get the raw material to Santiago, cost what it might, and that was that.

The decision was made and it was final; we communicated it to the administration who gave us the green light. It took a while to put together the means to realize it, though. We knew that there was a whole fleet of trucks destined to the Truck Owners' Trade Union once their conflict was resolved. We tried getting the use of a few of these trucks through official channels but without luck. The government was doing all in its power to resolve this obviously political strike without provoking open conflict.

We couldn't accept an impasse of this type. The trucks were there. The truck owners were interested in something else much beyond their use: the paralysis of the country and the eventual overthrow of the government. It was a vicious circle. So we adopted the only solution possible: we hijacked the trucks and assumed full responsibility for our action.

Once we obtained the means to fetch the raw material, we convoked a general meeting to inform all the workers of our success and ask for volunteers to accompany the trucks. Everyone knew what that involved — a long journey and a perilous one, most of it on our own time

and no bonus for a thing. The truck owners and right-wing terrorist groups were sniping at anything that moved along the roads, and dynamiting bridges and railway tracks. The response was tremendous — just about everyone volunteered; the selection proved difficult.

We incorporated our hijacked trucks into a large convoy. There was police protection at the beginning but only to the limits of the province — after that it was only sporadic. The convoy left on Wednesday, reached Huachipato on Friday, and got back to Santiago Sunday night. Our guys had to load and unload, sleep in the trucks, oftentimes go all day without eating because they'd left with just the money they had in their pockets. The snipers assaulted the convoy at several points. Three workers were killed in the skirmishes (fortunately none of them from the foundry). The volunteers showed up as usual on Monday morning. They were haggard but didn't complain. With renewed enthusiasm we began to prepare the molds. The next day, 11 September 1973, we'd been able to renew

the smelting.

The Snake Pit

When I first entered the foundry several years ago, I wondered what sort of snake pit I'd fallen into. The boss was a German who possessed several other firms besides. He'd shrewdly used a time-tested tactic — divide and conquer — and it had worked very well. The executives and foremen were his trusted men, those he'd signalled out as a mark of his favour. Then there was the institutional division between the 'workers' and 'employed persons'. The latter, which embraced administrative and certain manual workers with supposedly more specialized trades, had its own privileged social status and social security benefits; union-wise the 'employed persons' were divided into 'administratives' and 'productives'. The division of the 'workers' was completed by a discriminating bonus system which favoured certain groups at the expense of others. The overall results was a climate of jealousy and antagonism which gave

'Something Died in Chile'



everyone the chance to scorn some and envy others. A judicious combination of these elements usually resulted in the possible neutralization of the trade unions, thus putting them at the boss's service. The foremen and executives were all-powerful; they dictated measures arbitrarily and didn't hesitate to dismiss anyone who questioned them; that didn't bother them. There were always twenty guys outside to take your place. No use in appealing to the Work Inspection Office; you'd have to pay lawyers and there were hundreds of legal devices the boss could use to screw you.

I remember the day they fired the smelting oven crew — about twelve comrades. They'd been working between 14 and 16 hours a day for several months, Saturdays and Sundays included. They got together and refused to work overtime one weekend. Monday morning they were forbidden entry and told they had been fired for 'refusing to cooperate in production'. They didn't get a dime of indemnity and it took about two years to train guys to replace them.

At one point the boss got the brilliant idea that Argentinian specialists were a whole lot smarter than the local Chilean technicians and imported a whole lot of them. They certainly had nice diplomas, but from the first day it was evident that they were seeing iron smelt for the first time in their lives. We tried to show them their mistakes; those of us who were too

insistent were shown the door. At the end of a year more than 50 per cent of our products were being rejected — and of course the Argentinians kept putting all the blame on the Chilean workers. (It was only when we passed to state ownership under Allende that we were able to rid ourselves of them. The rejection percentage immediately dropped to less than 5 per cent.)

Our boss had a good heart. One year he made just a little too much money and was in danger of passing into another income tax bracket so he gave us a big fiesta to get rid of the excessive loot. A priest blessed the plant and praised the glory of work and the genius of man; famous artistic groups came to sing to us; politicians too came to share our lot for a few minutes. After the formal ceremonies the high brass withdrew and left the workers to assault the juicy beefsteaks and expensive wine which a few waiters tried to defend. It was phoney and paternalistic and even insulting; afterwards we felt ashamed at ourselves for having been drawn into such a thing.

Then there were the Friday pay lines. There you kept vigil for hours, sometimes in the rain, to receive like a beggar what you'd earned during the week. The boss paid you when he felt like it; if you didn't like it, lump it and go work somewhere else.

About six months prior to the 1970 elections, the boss went to Europe to

'see his family'. When he got back there was no money to pay us — and during the following months bank loans kept us going. In a year's time we were on the edge of bankruptcy, and the foundry with its 400 workers was in danger of being closed down within two weeks. When we realized how critical the situation was we began moving fast. A delegation succeeded in exposing our problem to Allende — a takeover was being planned but it wasn't necessary: the state intervened. The boss was obliged to sell 50 per cent of the stock to the state at a nominal value of a *peso* per stock to cover his debts. An administrator was named and the changes began. In the subsequent months the state bought the other 49 per cent.

Workers' Participation and a New Confidence

What next happened in the foundry was sort of the reflection at our level of what was going on in the country as a whole. It was sort of a new birth. All of a sudden this factory belonged to Chile, our production went to the national welfare. The destiny of the foundry was in our hands, and, through it, the destiny of our country. We were listened to for the first time; we could suggest, criticize, invent.

A worker participation system was set up. At first no one knew too much what these organizations were supposed to be; but as time went by they took form and importance, and developed into embryos of working-class power. All decisions of importance were amply discussed in the Production Committees, in the sections, in the assemblies. The new technicians were there to guide us, to share their knowledge with us, to help us with the elements of decision which only they could furnish. The whip gave way to confidence and, in general, the workers proved themselves worthy of this confidence.

The response to the periodic appeal of voluntary work was sort of a reflection of this new morale and awareness. Often-times our meetings lasted well on into the night and, in spite of the transportation problems, the guys remained till the end. Discussion was totally democratic — sometimes a bit disorderly — but everyone was listened to and respected. We formed a Discipline Commission with a majority of worker representation to try to help our fellow workers who got into trouble which under the previous administration would have meant their dismissal. All in all it worked extraordinarily well.

This doesn't mean that we didn't run into problems. Sometimes the administrators who occupied the politically distributed posts were restricting it to lower level decisions without a real control in the direction of the factory. Thus it was that, in face of internal frustrating limita-



tions, we took over the plant to demand the replacement of our first-named administrator. We won that battle and several subsequent ones. More and more we became conscious of our possibilities.

There was no repression whatsoever. When we were right we proved it . . . when we were wrong it was proved to us. A whole new dimension opened up and little by little we began to have confidence in ourselves. We had access to all levels of decision; I can honestly state that no door was ever closed to us when we wanted to consult with someone or when we sought a solution at a high level. I had spent years in the foundry without ever knowing where the administrator's office was — and I remember the day last year when we presented ourselves at a Minister's Office and were immediately received and listened to.

We tried to break down the barriers which had been erected to divide us. We dissolved the three trade unions and formed a single one. Any executive or foreman could be submitted to the Discipline Committee. A collective bonus system was set up. In general there was a qualitative change in human relationships. The executives and the technicians assisted at the worker assemblies at the same time as everyone else — and their vote wasn't worth more than that of a worker. We were all 'workers' with different functions — but the difference in function did not define social privileges. It was the birth of a new sort of society — the reflections of our hopes and aspirations. Great perspectives opened — and for this we were ready to sacrifice ourselves — and so we did, simply because we were convinced that this would mean a better world for ourselves and our kids.

One of the most striking changes when the state took over was that instead of his production, the worker himself became the centre of concern. The first big changes were social changes; decent wages, a canteen, decent sanitary facilities, showers, etc. And with a decent level of life and being treated as human beings, and aware of our dignity and responsibility, we produced more — and better. The suggestions of the workers led to several major improvements in the process.

The foundry now wasn't just a productive unit — it was a social unity which produced. A recreation programme was set up. Ample facilities were given to complete one's education in the foundry itself, or to follow programmes of technical and professional education. A library was created through voluntary efforts of the workers. Cultural groups periodically visited the plant with concerts, chorales, plays, etc. The 'roto', the broken down one, could now pull himself together, stand on his own two feet and take in hand his destiny. He was

no longer a tool to exploit; he was a person who had a right to develop his possibilities; the same right hitherto reserved to the bastard born on the other side of the tracks.

11 September 1973: Something Died

Tuesday morning, 11 September, the oven was relighted and we began to load it with the raw material from Concepcion. 9.00 a.m., when we got the first news of the coup, we called an assembly at once to find out what was going on. We decided to remain more united than ever. But there was the problem of the oven; if we were to dump it now we'd lose all the molds prepared the day before, but if we went on loading it and then had to dump it we'd lose not only the molds but more of the ingots obtained with such sacrifice. The guys decided to go on loading and hoping we'd be able to cast the molds in spite of everything. At 11.00 a.m. it was obvious that this time the situation was terribly serious.

The order was given to dump the oven; those who wanted to go to their homes could do so. I went to see the oven crew who were looking at the half-smelted metal they'd just dumped. They looked like they were going to cry: 'Hell, we shouldn't have dumped it, should we?'

On 19 September, ordinarily a national holiday, we were ordered to go back to work. Many of us discovered we'd

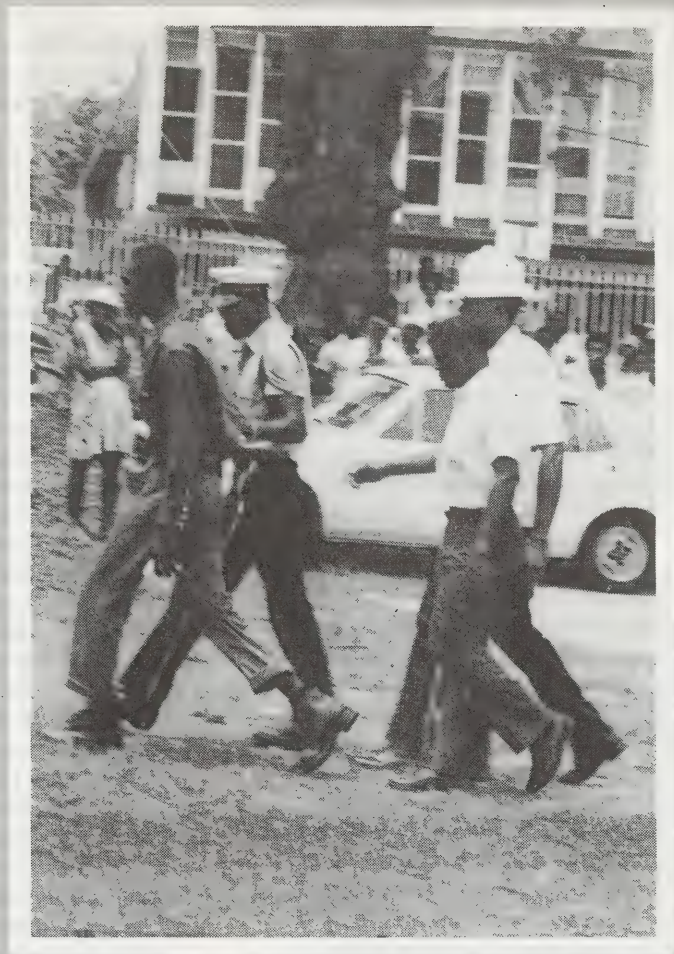
been suspended. The trade union had been dissolved, the participation system along with it. A military appointee was in charge. The wage increase due on 1 October and which would have restored our purchasing power in relation to the inflation increase had been annulled. The following Saturday all were obliged to work without being able to claim overtime. The working week was extended to 57 hours.

Those workers who did return, came at bayonet point. The junta ordered the 'patriotic' among the workers to denounce any 'subversives'.

Something died 11 September 1973 in this country named Chile: it was all this hope, all these aspirations to a better, more fraternal and more just society. All this newly recognized dignity and confidence in ourselves, all these new possibilities, which enabled us to direct and control our production . . . that was the subversion and that was the sin of the 'roto', the crime of the poor of Chile.

Great was the sin and dearly have we paid for it. Chile has lost some of its noblest leaders, leaders who in spite of the failings and contradictions had recognized in us something worthy of confidence, something with possibilities of development, the essential dignity of all those created in the image of God. Others never ceased of considering us as garbage. And when garbage becomes too annoying, you get rid of it. It's all very simple.





REPRESSION IN ST. VINCENT

In the small Eastern Caribbean island of St. Vincent two political militants have been sentenced to death. Junior 'Spirit' Cottle and Lorraine Laidlow, both founder members of the militant Black Liberation Action Committee, await execution in the island's prison. They have been accused of assassinating the Attorney General, Cecil Rawle, on 11 May 1973.

Our St. Vincent correspondent writes:

St. Vincent is one of the seven island grouping in the Eastern Caribbean with the peculiar status of 'Associate Statehood' with Britain - a half and half position between being a colony and being independent. The post-slavery economy is administered by local politicians, with Britain responsible for external defence. Of a total land acreage of 85,000 acres, 40,000 is Crown land - owned by the Queen - 28,000 acres (the best land at that) belongs to some 24 families, most of whom are local whites. On the remainder, some 17,000 acres of hillside land, 100,000 Vincentians must eke out a livelihood.

Unemployment stands at 30 per cent of the working population, the majority of whom congregate around the capital, Kingstown. This section of the population has spawned the most militant political organisations on the island in opposition to the ruling party and its conventional opposition. The Organisation for Black Cultural Awareness (OBCA) and the Black Liberation Action Committee (BLAC) are the two most well known. From their inception their members have been faced with constant police harassment and brutality.

On 11 May 1973 Cecil Rawle, the Attorney General, was assassinated at his home. Armed police launched a massive attack on both organisations for two consistent weeks, arresting and

brutalising some 19 of their members and murdering another - Marcus James - who was found with a bullet hole in his chest. Of those arrested, Cottle and Laidlow were charged with the murder of Rawle. Cottle was born in rural St. Vincent. He attended a secondary school in Kingston - Bishops College. (It was temporarily closed in 1973 after the students protested against the racism of an English priest.) After his expulsion from school, Cottle was employed as a lighthouse watchman for two years and lost his job after he was arrested in the course of the political activities of BLAC, which he founded along with other employed and unemployed youths. Lorraine Laidlow was born in the slums of Kingstown and at the end of his primary education never succeeded in getting employment.

The murder trial began on 8 October 1973, less than one week after the preliminary hearing was finished. The defence lawyers had little or no time to prepare the cases, and even during the preliminary hearing they would only be informed of a sitting on the particular morning itself. The jury comprised several known supporters of the Government: the foreman is an active politician, two brothers on the jury are active supporters of the party in power and employed by the Government, and another juror is a member of the local Chamber of Commerce and the husband of Cottle's former school teacher who was responsible for his expulsion from

secondary school. During early stages of the trial jurors were publicly saying that the defendants 'would hang'.

The prosecution's case was simply that Cottle and Laidlow burst into the Attorney General's home and assassinated him. There has been evidence that Rawle's life was threatened by another Minister in the Government, that there was bitter inter-party rivalry with threats and counter-threats of violence. Also to emerge at the trial was the actual cause of death. After the shooting, a local surgeon, Dr. Sunderam, operated on Rawle and pronounced that he would recover. Another surgeon was flown in from Trinidad and, despite protests from Dr. Sunderam that a second operation would endanger the patient's life, he operated. Dr. Sunderam's evidence was to the effect that the cause of death was the second operation.

Despite glaring contradictions in the prosecution's case, particularly over the question of identification, the State was successful in getting a conviction and, in so doing, laying the blame for the assassination on the developing revolutionary political organisations.

A movement exists in St. Vincent to demand that Cottle and Laidlow be set free. Letters and telegrams of protest should be addressed to: the Prime Minister, Kingstown, St. Vincent, West Indies.

Donations to the defence fund should be sent to: Cresswell Burke, BLAC, Edinboro, St. Vincent, West Indies.

The body of Marcus James - the state of it indicates that the time of death was a day earlier than that claimed by the police (Top Left). On 22 May 1973 the young, employed and unemployed, turned out for James' funeral in a massive demonstration of solidarity (Top Right). 'Spirit' Cottle (left) being led back to jail after a court appearance. Bystanders commented on his drawn appearance, apparently still suffering from a bullet wound (Bottom Left). Picketing outside the courthouse in June 1973 during 'Spirit' and Lorraine's trial (Bottom Right).



BACKLASH

features responses to May's 'The Caribbean Revolution De-Mystified'. Next month's BACKLASH will be on 'The Black Prisoner'

A Poem Some Politicians will have to Understand For Bukkha Rennie

Kingston;
Harlem;
London. & now,
Kingston again. Poverty
has spun full circle & I
must re-enter where I went out.
New brooms should sweep clean
but now

I walk alone, along
unfamiliar streets
littered
by broken promises &
the bodies of broken men cradling
carcasses of yesterday's dreams
for comfort.

But what other comfort
is there for them? For Mother Penny,
daily prostrating herself for
the privilege of scrubbing
the middle class's clothes &
dispensing obeah in her spare time; for
Mass Sammy & Uncle Gramps whose highest stations
were as houseboys & gardeners; for
the youths prostituting themselves
as tourists' gigolos?

My beginnings started
there. Here
was where I turned cartwheels
in the sands & swam
against the tides to emerge
dripping fish scales. Here, also,
was where I first dreamed of
Going To Meet The Man. I
could have gone on &
stopped there. But that
would be to end where I began, &
the time for running on the spot
is over.

This, then,
is Independence:
'The right to self-determination';
the other substanceless slogans
leached to our cause to
pluck us from the clutch of colonial irresponsibility &
deliver us into this den of thieves:
a corrupt politician's paradise.
The cardboard/tarpaulin jungle
spawned by Kingston to
slowly creep behind the waterfront
like some mis-shapen snail; the barefoot,
emaciated children whose lives
are like deaths, whose deaths
are a condemnation for the living:
these all speak for themselves.
Old masters & ideologies have been exchanged
for others equally callous. But
one cannot harken back to the past:
there was no golden age
of slavery, & the old
must make way
for the new.

I could tell my fellow sufferers
to be magnanimous. To remember:
'Every major city has its disease & decadence;
its slums & its slum-dwellers;
its pimps & its prostitutes;
its crimes & its criminals.'

But that would be cold comfort indeed
for those daily eking a pauper's existence
from the Kingston dungheap; or
those nightly enduring their
children's tortured groans as
they once again embrace the bugs. They
would probably, rightly, reply:
'Enough is enough; too much of one thing good for nothing!'
Or some other proverb. (I have forgotten the phrasing
but the meance of the meaning remains
crystal clear.)

True,
we now have the arrogantly skyscraping hotels
which rise as monuments to these
dead men & their dead ideas; we
have the W.W. II airplanes &
other discarded weapons fit
only for fighting the
discarded people who
are my brothers.
(Now we know: 'responsibility for our own defence'
means second-hand guns with which we
become our own murderers!) &
naturally,
we've been blessed with the mercedes &
transistor radio syndrome &
other chromium symbols of
modernity which speak
the forked tongue
of progress.

But back in the shanty towns,
away from the conspicuously consuming
politicians who daily eat their election
words; & away from the instamatic eyes
of all but the most prying tourists,
persistent poverty
another tongue.
It tells the true tale of
those same skyline hotels
which I, as a blackman, will never
be permitted to enter; it speak
of sunkissed beaches on which I may never
sun my afrikan-black skin; of sieve-like roofs
under which my neighbours soak
in sleep; &
most of all, it speaks
of the official indifference
which conspires to make me
more powerless & despised
than any alien in this:
my native land.

More De-Mystification Necessary

Sir,

I am certain that there is a great deal to be learnt from a close look at the Caribbean, and in particular from the dramatic events that took place in Trinidad in 1970 and since. These events include the emergence in 1973 of a guerilla force. But, as with the '70 events, the true nature of the guerillas is clouded by the desire of main commentators on the spot, so to speak, to rush to conclusions, or, over-enthusiastically to will certain forms on to the events.

Bukkha Rennie, in his piece entitled 'The Caribbean Revolution De-Mystified' (*Race Today*, May 1974), does anything but fulfil the promise of his title. Is the British audience he addresses expected, simply, to take it as given: that the Caribbean has a truly unique position in the world; that there is a 'Caribbean nation'; that in that nation there is being made a 'Caribbean Revolution'; and, that Trinidad is the leading light on the way to that revolution?

Apart from the rhetoric, which may be a style that has proved successful in the past, such claims, if poorly-founded, could do disservice to Rennie's revolutionary cause, by misleading its forces. The Caribbean area has inherited a set of 'nationalisms' that are surprisingly durable — some linguistic, and some island 'nationalisms'. These argue, whether we like it or not, against any easy total nationalism. In this context, a 'Caribbean Revolution' is unlikely to be an immediate practicality; although we might conceive of revolutions of the Caribbean peoples.

Rennie's proposition that Trinidad might be 'a blown up mirror to the other islands', is, perhaps, his most interesting. But even here he doesn't clearly state, for the British audience, the escalation and coincidence of events that made up the 1970 uprising. We are given a rundown of major political movements up to Eric Williams' Peoples National Movement in 1956. But we are given no guide through the mixture of workers' strikes and marches; the influence of American 'black power' politics; the effects of the Sir George Williams (Canadian University) affair on Trinidad university students; the unprecedented emergence of the unemployed; and the military rebellion. We know that these things happened, but the conjuncture was remarkable, and could do with concentrated analysis. Out of these events, Rennie refers to 'Dual Power' having existed, which is doubtful where the state had a virtual monopoly of armed force. More correctly, in another place, he says 'the question of Dual Power was posed'. He refers, further, to a 'vanguard' of students and unemployed with no theory or strategy, 'nothing to propose', and denounces it. And despite the fact that the unemployed

and student leadership of the National Joint Action Committee were not a revolutionary leadership, Rennie claims that they defied 'the dogma of classical revolutionary tradition'. Finally, Rennie asserts that the guerillas in the hills, the National United Freedom Fighters (NUFF), are a socialist organisation for 'scientific socialism', but not explicitly employing a 'foco' strategy or any variant on that. And it isn't clear if Rennie is suggesting that the unemployed have moved to support NUFF, or that they are NUFF.

There is much that is unclear. Even to one in voluntary exile in Babylon, it is clear that the revolutions of the Caribbean peoples are not simply invoked because we sympathise with and must encourage the struggles of our peoples. And mere chauvinistic insistences on the centrality of the Caribbean to the 'underdeveloped' experience will not ensure that it is central to the revolutions of the 'underdeveloped' societies of the world. Socialist revolutions will be made on the basis of developed theory and strategy informing mass organisations. And the formation of a Caribbean nation, which is a socialist Caribbean nation, is an even longer march.

Colin Prescod

The Agricultural Workers' Struggle Sir,

I basically agree with Bukkha Rennie's article, 'The Caribbean Revolution De-Mystified'. Although his analysis on the Trinidad developments since 1970 was fair, he had very little to say about the rest of the Caribbean.

I would like to know why in an extensive discussion of the Trinidad scene nothing was said about the demands and activity of the Indians in the agricultural industry — somehow they were omitted from the new emerging revolutionary vanguard. This section of the working class is making demands on the state in Trinidad, and in what and whichever direction the new vanguard forges, it would have to take account of their revolutionary demands. There has always been a tendency in the Caribbean for the organised labour forces to see the activities of this section of the working class as of no consequence, and that revolutionary leadership is a gift from their more urbanised comrades. The agricultural worker should taper his demands. The agricultural workers in Trinidad were certainly not waiting for any other groups' consent to wage their struggle, and rightly so — they have fired the cane fields in full West Indian tradition — no apologies given; any victory they achieve as a section of a class is a victory for the class as a whole.

I don't intend to say that the above views are those of Mr. Rennie but it is an open question when an article, which attempts to lucidate the Trinidad scene since 1970, does not mention the specific struggle waged by this section of the

class. Especially in the light of the recent history of the Guyanese agricultural workers' experience where international capital spares no expense to suppress that specific section of the working class. In Guyana the Indian workers have presented a threat to capital-labour relations since the turn of the century and have paid very dearly in blood. This is not a denial of the importance of Herbert Critchlow's Guyana's Labour Union, but the fact remains that had the agricultural workers managed to change significantly their position, who can say what would have happened?

When have the Caribbean people ever apologised for what they have done in their own self interest? Dessalines and the people of Haiti deemed it necessary in order to have freedom that every white man, woman and child be killed. They asked no one to forgive them, for it was a question of freedom or slavery. It was the historians of the West Indies, both black and white, some house slaves and some proposed revolutionaries, who in the name of international Marxist's humanity apologised to the world for their barbarianism — as they did for Bogle in Jamaica and Cuffy in Guyana.

It is in this same apologist tradition that the Jamaican state tear-gassed and baton-charged its people in Sabina Park a few years ago.

Mr. Rennie's article is basically about Trinidad. Except for the brief snatches of the names of our past and present dictators, little if anything is said about the rest of the Caribbean. He does speak about the temperament and history of the Caribbean peoples, but capital does not have a uniform relationship for each of the Caribbean islands *per se* and thus has adapted itself to the specificity of the struggle as it arises in each individual

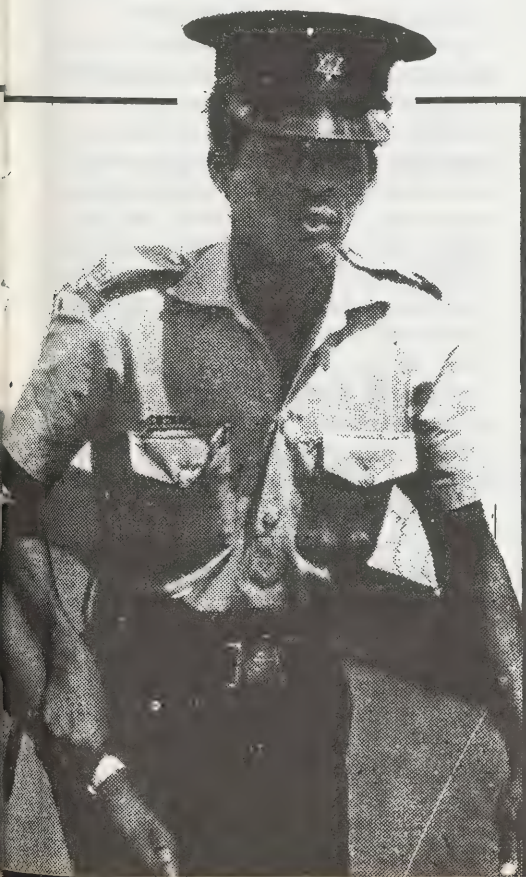


island.

What about the French attempts to de-populate Martinique and Gadeloupe by migration to France and Cayenne on favorable terms (guaranteed holidays in their native island every few years inclusive) in an attempt to destroy the nationalist movement, and reduce the island to a French Bahamas?

The idea that the Caribbean forms a bridge between the developed and the under-developed world is an open question. These islands have a high level of capitalist production relationship, but also a high level of capital accumulation. The capital accumulated by the foreign banking industry and international corporations is equal to that accrued in other plantation economies as Beckford put it. Low capital accumulation is usually found in economies with peasant holdings on a large scale or the family plantation system. In the West Indies this is not the case; the family plantations died with slavery. They were replaced by the multi-national corporation and its totally integrated production system, e.g. Tate & Lyle — actual profits for growing and milling sugar may be low, but the profits made from its bi-products, rum and molasses — besides that made from shipping, distribution and the refining of the product in the metropolitan country — are astronomical.

On an historical note, capital accumulated in the West Indies played an important role in the development of western capitalism. We financed the birth of western industrialism, and that is no mean feat. The methods of exploitation may have changed but the degree of exploitation has increased rather than decreased in recent years.



Finally, Mr. Rennie's article was a disappointment. He failed to say anything that de-mystified the Caribbean peoples' struggle. His information on Trinidad was accurate to a point, but, as I have pointed out, he didn't consider the question of the agricultural workers. Nor is there mention of the Black Power Movement, which played an important role in mobilising the West Indian masses in the late 60s, but which was co-opted by the national bourgeoisie leadership and international capital (especially in Guyana and Jamaica) because of the limited objectives in the demands made by its projectors. Fanon said our demands must be of the kind that capital cannot compromise — all power to our people, total revolution, not reform, has been the basic demand of our people since slavery. That is why the repression of our people has been so brutal over the centuries.

Padawole

The Struggle Here is the Struggle Back Home

Sir,

Bukkha Rennie's article is a very serious analysis of the very critical Caribbean situation.

He says that Trinidad is at the forefront of the Caribbean struggle. This is true and it is traditional. In 1937 Butler's successful general strike in Trinidad had repercussions in almost every island.

We are a new society, compared to the rest of the world. We began only since the time of slavery. People may assume that, in comparison with older societies, we should be backward in the demands for our needs to be satisfied. But against all the vicious odds that capitalism, utilising colour supremacy, has placed in our path, we are challenging the State and are on the threshold of taking political power in almost every island.

Our people have long ago learned to ignore the advice of those who would guide our struggle from abroad, and have not waited for help from outside. The contempt felt by Bukkha and his generation for outside 'revolutionaries' is nothing new. Other generations before Bukkha's also felt this deceit from the outside. We have learnt through bitter experience to tell the rest of the world to keep out. Cuba is still facing a blockade; capitalist America tried to starve millions of Cubans to death. Britain has never spared the use of force to subdue any revolution, as is shown in the case of Guyana and Anguilla in recent times. France is always quick to use the trigger in Martinique and Guadeloupe, and Holland in Curacao and Aruba.

For those of us who live abroad our interests seem to be divided. Although we work and are forced to contribute to the economy of the countries in which we reside, we are also forced to wage a constant war for our own protection. We have on our backs not only the weight of the

State but the majority of the population, and we here are also treated with contempt by the same 'revolutionaries'. So the opposite of Bukkha's statement, that the politically conscious sisters and brothers would be shocked into a rude awakening by the happenings at home, is also true: I am sure those at home would be shocked at the happenings here.

We don't feel that the struggle here is any different from the struggle back home. For the 'self-exiled' West Indian living in the metropolitan countries, our conditions are economically better than those of our sisters and brothers at home. But we find ourselves fighting the same enemy wherever we go. England is no bed of roses. We are also dehumanised over here by the same capital. Some are more anxious to struggle than others, but, like the boll weevil, we are all still looking for a home.

In his piece Bukkha has left out the 1948 sugar strike which to me was a very important part of the history of our island. For the people who took part in that political struggle, it was a great event. It led to the emancipation of the cane fields from the barracks built to accommodate slaves in the 19th century. Maybe waterfront and oil workers were the vanguard. But the struggle and the forms it took, with Butler leading the oil workers and calling on the sugar workers to strike, was and still remains an epic in my mind of the power and organisation of the Trinidad working class.

The unemployed are the daughters and sons of the employed and impoverished in the city and in the country. They are a creation of capital. The mass of the population that used to work in the sugar plantation are today faced with starvation. Thousands of women, men and children who depended on those fields for a living six months of the year are thrown out and replaced by machinery. The same for the oil workers who are replaced by modern technology. When capitalism has no more use for you, they throw you aside regardless of your industry or your sex.

The middle-class women who formed HATT are not the majority of women in Trinidad and were not the majority of HATT (a mass movement against high prices). The majority are in the struggle. They have suffered the most both by capital and under the hands of their men. It was a woman who burnt Charlie King, the pig, in 1937, which was a signal to start the rebellion. As Bukkha said, the need to clarify is necessary.

NUFF is necessary but not enough. The wealth of the island both past and present has always been in the hands of a few, but one day the order will be changed. So in spite of the strength of capitalism and the despotism of Williams and his gang of houseslaves as its protectors, it will crumble because the population of the Caribbean is alive.

Theophilus Phillip

REVIEWS

Rise and Fall of Party Politics in Trinidad and Tobago

Franklyn Harvey

New Beginning Movement, Toronto, 1974. 50p.

Unless the making of revolution is seen as simply a very big 'street fight', we must conceive of some form of organisation relevant to accurately directing revolutionary forces. This document, from the New Beginning Movement, as its title suggests, is intended to chart the inadequacy of political parties to serve working class interests throughout the recent history of Trinidad and Tobago. The analysis is made to suggest that the workers have taken note of the hypocrisy of all the political parties which have betrayed working class interests; and that now the workers, students, unemployed and farmers have developed their own organisations which can be relied upon to spontaneously combine in the moment of revolution.

Trinidad and Tobago have had three remarkable experiences that will have contributed to the development of this thesis. The first experience is that of being dominated, since 1956, by Eric Williams and his Peoples' National Movement party. The second experience is the existence of a massive section of unemployed and underemployed (comprising, perhaps, more than 40 per cent of the urban population), who put themselves on the political map in no uncertain way in 1970. And the third experience is the explosive events of rebellion against the Williams' regime, and largely stoked by the unemployed in 1970.

Eric Williams has held court over a worsening situation in Trinidad and Tobago ever since 'independence' in 1961, but there have been no real rivals for his

seat of power — either individuals or parties — in all the time up to 1970, and even beyond. One of the things that explains this is that the PNM represents the epitome of middle-class led, reformist parties in this society, and the only new intrusion would be a party serving working class interests. Such a party was not forthcoming. Franklyn Harvey recognises, repeatedly, the petit bourgeois, neo-colonialist or simply misled politics of all political parties in the history of Trinidad, but argues as though revolutionary socialism could have been expected of them. Of course the major parties, whatever slogans they mouthed, never presented revolutionary programmes. And so, what Harvey is trying, throughout most of his document, is to perform a sleight-of-hand trick, to change, before our very eyes, a passable critical analysis of party politics into a theoretical imperative indicating the redundancy of a *revolutionary* party.

The experience of Eric Williams for something like 18 years has been so traumatic that it may have created a confused response in New Beginning. For New Beginning, Eric Williams' party showpiece, the PNM, is THE PARTY, and that party is dead and must be buried. Right on! But let us recall that the PNM is no *revolutionary* party. It was never a workers' party. Harvey points out that, in the period 1967-70, the unemployed refused to join any existing or new political organisation (p. 45). Could it be, that the unemployed refused to join, because those organisations could only offer struggle to secure the best present positions, whereas the unemployed had no present; and that it was only on the occasion of events suggesting radical change, that the unemployed came into a struggle that promised them a future?

Only a *revolutionary* party could have, and can, engage them at this level.

Perhaps the major failure of this document is that it fails to distinguish, clearly, between the concepts of *political* party and *revolutionary* party. It wishes to argue against the relevance of a *revolutionary* party, but where it actually confronts the *revolutionary* party, the strength of the argument is negative rather than positive (p. 39). Harvey states the ideal programme of a *revolutionary* party, but concludes that 'this ideal development and transformation from party to social movement has *never* taken place in history'; then the statement slips from the historical to the hysterical: '... and in all likelihood will never take place'. Now let us give Harvey his due. There is clearly a case for being wary of the *revolutionary* party. It can stifle the creative energies of the masses. It can initiate new forms of post-revolutionary hierarchical control. We've all watched the Soviet Union. But if we, Harvey and I, recognise the need for a strategic mechanism to organise the complexities of making revolution, what is to be done?

I quote:

It is to the great credit of the NJAC leadership that it bluntly refused to transform its organization into a political party to fight for parliamentary power. Its great weakness is that it did not put forward to the mass movement, a *clear* revolutionary perspective, both theoretically and concretely ... (p. 49).

Is this or is this not a call for a 'vanguard' instrument of the revolutionary forces? And, I quote again: 'The question then is, is the revolutionary vanguard still valid? The answer is yes ...' (p. 69).

I think that I can rescue this document from its pretensions. And it needs to be rescued if it is not to be hazardous to the forces it seeks to help, and if it is to consolidate the contribution it makes to analysing the history of working class and nationalist politics in Trinidad and the 'newer' middle-class ideologies, represented by Tapia in Trinidad, but to be expected throughout the Caribbean. The document pretends to argue for the inappropriateness of a revolutionary party to mass struggle in Trinidad and Tobago. However, it, in fact, argues for three principles: (1) a total social revolution, with mass hegemony; (2) the fostering of a socialist movement to operate principally outside existing bourgeois institutions, including the major parties, and that would create its own viable mass-based structures; and (3) development of a mass political organisation that must serve as a repository of theory and strategy and co-ordinate the many groups and tendencies in the movement. This last principle refers to the formation of a *revolutionary* party.

Colin Prescod



'Scientific racism' seeks re-entry to the respectable sanctuary of the scientific community. It emerged in the nineteenth century as a school of thought which argued that cultural variation between peoples is *basically* the result of biological variation. It fell into disrepute after the Nazis attempted to put its theories into practice, but over the last decade there has been a significant resurgence of 'scientific racism'. Dr. John Baker, Fellow of the Royal Society, is its latest proponent. In *Race*, he mounts a seemingly powerful argument for 'scientific racism', whilst at the same time chastising those who, for political reasons, have opposed its rebirth.

In this review we have set out to expose the scientific fallacies lying at the heart of his argument. To avoid accusations of prejudice we have frequently quoted Baker's own words when presenting his ideas. However, we believe it would be irresponsible to stop short of discussing the political implications of 'scientific racism'.



Firstly we will present his most important conclusions:

... the clearest evidence of the superiority of a race might be derived from the ability of its members, or some of them, to create a civilization (p. 506).

... certain races of man not only never attained independently to the status of civilization, but never independently reached the intermediate stage (p. 529).

It is fair to conclude that the author believes that there are superior and inferior races. In fact, in a footnote, he departs from his principle of not giving 'any practical applications of the conclusions reached' (p. 3) and suggests:

It is probable that many ethnic taxa that have not yet made any important contributions to the advancement of man could progress rapidly by encouraging the intermarriage and fertility of their most intelligent members (p. 529).

Those who feel that it is time for scientific studies of ethnic problems have not been well served by Dr. Baker. He reveals himself as an amateur, quite unable to come to grips with most of the problems in the field. This shows in the number of rambling digressions and the general atmosphere of pseudo-erudition that pervades the work. We are given at great length lessons in elementary zoology, systematics, classification and historical studies on evolutionary concepts. Interesting perhaps, but not always relevant to the problems he sets himself. His omissions, on the other hand, are startling. There is

little or nothing on:

The biological uniqueness of man, the biological potential for culture and its evolution;

contemporary historical and anthropological studies on Africa (his chapter on Southern African cultures is based on anecdotal reminiscences and observations of certain 19th century explorers); or the relevance of *modern* studies on linguistics and symbolic systems.

Such shortcomings are serious in a work claiming to cover all aspects of the race problem.



However, in our view, the major flaw of the book is methodological. It begins from a totally unfounded assumption that culture can be basically explained as the expression of biological principles. Such *biologism* is currently quite fashionable and is found, for example, in the works of Conrad Lorenz, Robert Ardrey, and the 'Ecologists' *Blue Print for Survival*.

Baker is a crude biological reductionist:

One might almost go as far as to say, in relation to the ethnic problem, that the proper study of mankind is animals (p. 65).

The danger of such an approach is that unless one is very careful, one begins to discuss the problems of higher levels of organisation of matter in terms of concepts derived from studies of lower levels. It is tempting, but invariably leads to bad science. The properties of living organisms cannot be explained by chemical concepts alone, nor can the properties of cultures be explained in terms of biology.

At each organisation level of matter, new properties arise. With the evolution of mankind a new property, found nowhere else in the living world, develops — culture. The methods, tools, and concepts of biology are not sufficient to explain the properties of culture. Dr. Baker's failure to appreciate this would account for the biologism that pervades his book.

This is particularly apparent in his study of the species problem in biology and its application to mankind. Biologically, a species is a population whose members can breed together and produce fertile offspring under natural conditions. Despite the many biological differences between the various human races (Baker laboriously lists most of them) they all appear to be willing and able to hybridise. Baker finds this hard to understand since the difference in, say, skull shapes between human races is often greater than that found between the skulls of different mammalian *species*, such as the fox and the jackal.

It may well be doubted whether any two kinds of animals, differing from one another so

markedly in morphological characters (and in odour) as, for instance, the Europid (Indo-European) and Sanid (Bushman), and living under natural conditions of wild life, would accept one another as sexual partners (p. 97).

Unfortunately for this argument they do!

Baker recognises this and struggles manfully in search of a biological explanation for such anti-social behaviour, which seemingly prevents the further biological evolution of mankind into more than one species.

Noting the biological fact that many animal species under domestication attempt to interbreed, sometimes successfully, he reasons that human races do not recognise their 'own kind' and insist on 'miscegenation' (interbreeding) because their 'sensitivity' has been attenuated by domestication. Thus, human races interbreed because man is 'self-domesticated'.

This argument is typical of Baker's biological reductionism. Domestication in relation to man's condition is not a scientific concept. It is perfectly valid in relation to other species of life brought into human society and subject to artificial selection for traits useful to mankind. But to be human is to live in society; there is no 'natural condition of wild life' for humanity other than society. Society is our condition of life. This condition is too complex to be mechanically explained in biological terms. Because Baker refuses to see this, he is forced to speculate vainly about the effects of domestication and makes foolish statements to the effect that:

the facts of human hybridity do not prove that all human races are to be regarded as belonging to a single species (p. 98).

Here it is worth noting that Dr. Baker observes, with seeming approval, that Hitler in *Mein Kampf* 'starts from the standpoint of biology, by remarking on the tendency of animals to mate strictly with their own kind' (p. 59). The reduction of the ethnic question to biology inevitably tends to lead, irrespective of the author's feelings, to racism.



Dr. Baker's pedantic scholarship rarely stretches outside biology. When it does his views are antiquated and do not stand the test of modern scholarship. Take his ideas on language, surely of vital importance to his study. He appears to argue, for example, that vocabulary is the core of a language (p. 393). This is not the case, for the complexity and power of a language lies in its grammar not its words; and in grammar, simplicity in one area is compensated for in another.

One can also criticise his opinion that:

One of the principal achievements of man has been the invention and development of

language. The level of achievement in this respect varies widely among the different ethnic taxa (p. 500).

Firstly, he states that some languages are primitive ('so primitive a language as that of the Arunta' (p. 501)). No modern linguist would claim 'primitive' languages exist. Arunta is a subtle and complex language and it is quite unscientific to refer to it as 'primitive' in the sense that it is, say, inferior to English. Secondly, he promotes the idea that language is 'invented' and that there is:

... reason to believe that this must have been the product not of any society as a whole, but of its intelligent members only (p. 501).

No contemporary linguist believes this.

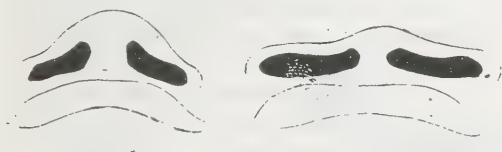
Baker is also unscientific when he states:

(that via) mass means of communication ... the parts of speech tend to be blurred, the sentence to be corrupted.

There is no evidence that any changes in the language brought about through 'mass means of communication' are for the worse. Baker's section on language illustrates that he has not understood the essence of modern linguistics and has been content to select (and misunderstand) information that supports his thesis of inferior and superior races.

Once one accepts the proposition that some races may be superior to others, it is an extremely tricky problem choosing *scientific* criteria of such inferiority or superiority. The difficulty of this task is compounded when it is assumed that such criteria must be biological.

First, Baker examines the evidence for correlation between brain size and intellectual achievement. There is none. Next he works through, at great length, the question of IQ and race. Again he reaches no firm scientific conclusion. This question has been argued at great length elsewhere, and we will only point out that Baker leaves the reader with only subjective impressions, e.g. that the American Negro's intellectual contributions, despite improved educational facilities, have 'been disappointing'. That those who have made some impression generally have a large mixture of European genes. No *scientific* evidence is given. His case rests on innuendo.



In his quest for criteria of superiority and inferiority, Baker is left only with the capacity of a race to achieve civilization by its own unaided efforts. But the problem of the origin and development of civilization is a far more complex question than he appears to realise. Furthermore, his conclusions are based on several unsupported assumptions:

1. His idiosyncratic definition of 'civilization', which is naive and owes nothing to science. No society meets all his criteria, which include such items as no torture, no mutilations, and near perfect justice. But why not, no napalm, no atomic and biological weapons? His criteria are nothing but an eclectic mishmash of personal prejudice and superficial observation, despite the considerable body of literature available on this topic, a study of which would have enabled him to pick out the more important structures of civilized cultures. Is the wearing of clothes more fundamental than the use of the wheel, or money than a written language, or agriculture than cities? There is no way of deciding from Baker's study. The work of Marx, Gordon Childe, Karl Wittfogel, the cultural evolutionists, such as Leslie White and Darcy Ribeiro, all of whom attempted a scientific study of changing modes of production, and the concomitant cultural possibilities, are studiously ignored.

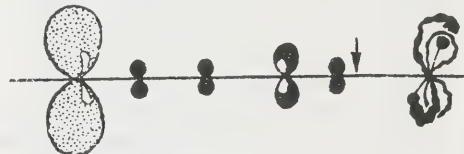
2. That 'civilized' society is superior to 'uncivilized' society. Such an assumption usually contains within itself Victorian concepts of progress. Many contemporary anthropologists are rightly critical of such assumptions which classify pre-literate cultures as 'primitive', 'backwards', 'lazy', or 'stupid'. Baker fails to consider adequately the 'post-Boasian' formulations of the race-culture problem, or the more recent anthropological economics studies by people such as Marshall Sahlins or Maurice Godelier. If one ignores such research one can hardly lay claim to a complete, or even serious, study of the ethnic problem.

3. That 'civilized society' (assuming a satisfactory scientific definition) is causally related to any biological differences that may exist between 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' peoples. Despite a detailed examination of the biological literature, Baker fails to establish any such correlation. Again we are left with innuendo — which tells us more of his own subjective feelings than the socio-cultural sciences.

To then argue: '... that civilization has always originated and developed through the presence in a population of a small proportion of very talented people' (p. 525), is not scientifically productive. It has a tautological ring to it. Why did one population become civilized? *Answer:* because they possessed the necessary talented elite. Why did another population not develop a civilization? *Answer:* because they did not possess the necessary talented elite. Such a view actually hampers historical research. The idea of individual talent, or even genius, being the major *determining* factor of trends in the history of society, science or technology is far from being scientifically proven. On the contrary, the 'great man' theory of history has never been weaker.

Thus, to Baker's biologism we must

add his naive views of the social role of the intellectual. Nowhere is his ignorance of the socio-economic aspects of the history of ideas more exposed than in his history of racist ideas. They are presented as pure thoughts and their authors simple seekers after truth. Count de Gobineau, whose theories found practical expression in Nazi genocide, is 'a cultured and well informed person' (p. 35). Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is a 'somewhat less violent and emotional book than anyone would be likely to suppose' (p. 59), 'few could guess that the thoughts brooding in his mind would eventually lead to mass murder' (p. 61).



There is no excuse now. We do know where the path of 'scientific racism' leads, to scientific and political death. It in no way furthers the cause of scientific discovery based as it is on a methodological fallacy. But what it does provide is a respectable mask for the ugly face of racial prejudice.

We would ask John Baker, who claims the role of a disinterested seeker of the truth, whether he is prepared to take the responsibility for the actions of those who will use his musings on racial superiority and inferiority as the intellectual underpinnings for racist politics?

Paul Arnold & Harry Rothman

RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS

"VOICES OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD"

A book of poems by Linton Kwesi Johnson. *Voices* was first performed at the Keskidee Centre in June 1973. *Youths of Hope* and *Five Nights of Bleeding* have appeared in earlier issues of this magazine.

Priced at 50p, copies are obtainable at a few bookshops or direct from Towards Racial Justice, 184 King's Cross Road, London, WC1.

"RACE AND RESISTANCE: The Institute of Race Relations Story" by A. Sivanandan.

The Institute is threatened with closure. This pamphlet explains why. It relates the IRR to the imperial history that spawned it and shows how when the staff began to attack racism and vested interest, and develop new perspectives and functions, it lost its traditional financial backing.

30p per copy.

Back Issues

We have a limited number of back copies of *Race Today* which are still available at 15p a copy including postage. Below is a selected list: a fully comprehensive list of titles going back to 1970 is available from our office on receipt of a stamp.

1973

January: Whatever Happened to C.A.R.D.? Racism and Church-Goers.
February: Holland's 'Red Niggers'.
March: Blacks and the British Army.
April: Our E.S.N. Children. A Special Report.
May: Racism by Post.
June: The Deportation Business Special Report.
Avis Brown: The Colony of the Colonised (Race, sex and class).
July: Single black mothers. Racism and school text-books.
August: Black People and Trades Unions: A Special Report.
September: Race and Intelligence: Debunking the I.Q. Myth.
October/November: Books, Libraries and Racism. A Special Report.
December: Black People and the Police. A Special Report.

1974

January: Race, Sex and Working Class Power by Selma James
February: The Black Explosion in Schools by Farrukh Dhondy.
March: Trade Unionism v. Revolution in South Africa by Ken Jordaan and The Institute Story: The Unacceptable Face by A. Sivanandan.
April: The Sixth Pan-African Congress. A Special Report and Asian Workers in Struggle.

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NAME

ADDRESS

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CALENDAR

Notice of forthcoming events will be published free in this Calendar if space permits. Final copy date for the July issue is Thursday 6 June.

May
 14 7.45 p.m.

Threats to Immigrants and Exiles public meeting, Caxton Hall, London.
 Organisers: National Secular Society, 698 Holloway Road, London N19.
 Tel: 01-272 1266.

18 2.00-5.30 p.m.

Hillingdon Campaign Against Racism a conference supported by the London Co-operative Society. At Theatre 'E' Lecture Block, Brunel University, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

19 5-8 p.m.

Poetry and Music Evening at the Keskidee Centre, Gifford Street, Islington, London Admission 25p members, 35p non-members.

19-26 9.30 a.m. - 9.30 p.m.

Cultural Week at the Keskidee Centre. A week of books and costumes exhibition. Caribbean food served during the day and evenings.
 Keskidee Centre, Gifford Street, Islington, London N1. Tel: 609 1296.

23 6.30 p.m.

British Colonial War in the Gulf - a talk sponsored by the IRR and the Gulf Committee to be held at the Institute of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Road, N1
 A film on the Gulf will also be shown.
 All welcome.

SIXTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

The Conference date has now been changed to June 19-27 1974. The venue is still the University of Dar es Salaam.

Correction: Asian Workers

Sir,

An interview with Mike Rodda, TGWU, Convenor in this factory, appeared in the April issue of *Race Today*. Not only does the interview, described in your editorial as 'charting with precision and clarity the historical processes involved in the span from peasant to industrial worker', contain several completely inaccurate facts about this factory, but it also negates the work in the field of community relations which many of the managers, supervisors, shop stewards and ordinary work-people in this factory have been actively pursuing.

Corrections to errors of fact in the article, some of which Mike Rodda tells me are certainly not accurate representations of what he told the interviewer, are:
 (a) Not only black people work in the 'rough' jobs. We have coloured workers in manual, semi-skilled, skilled (craft), clerical, supervisory and senior supervisory grades. Similarly we have white people

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PERSONAL

PLAYS WANTED

Black writers are asked to submit Plays for the forthcoming World Black and African Festival of Arts & Culture that will take place in November-December 1975 in Lagos. The Works should reflect the Black experience in this country.

Prior to the main Festival a production of the selected works will be staged for the UK mini-festival in September- October 1974.

Submit plays to: UKAFT, 46 Kingsway, London WC2. Closing date end of May.

HOME TYPING

required by accurate typist: theses, manuscripts, books, etc. No job too small or too large. Contact Mrs. Joan Worrell, 116 Romero Square, Ferrier Estate, Kidbrooke SE3.
 Tel: 01-856 4090.

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Emergency Hot-line Service, phone anytime day or night for help on your arrest, clarification of your rights, advice on your case or if you need a lawyer. Sponsored by *Race Today*.

employed at all level down to the very lowest.

(b) Foreign workers here are paid exactly the same rates, and work under exactly the same conditions as white workers.

(c) No one here, black or white, gets paid £40 for working 80 hours per week. In the rare event of someone working 80 hours, their gross earnings would be around £70.80.

(d) The shop steward at Felltram Way was not sacked recently because he was a militant. There was a dispute there recently (although not part of this factory, it is one of the Company's transport depots) when the shop steward received and accepted a written warning about timekeeping.
 (e) A minor point - this factory does not produce milk bottles.

Mike Rodda agrees with my request that you print a correction in your next issue. In view of the strong feelings in the factory about the article, he and I issued a works' notice jointly to the same effect.

A. Goda (Personnel Manager)
 Key Glassworks (United Glass Group)
 New Cross
 London SE14

A Dozen Ways To Help Us Build

Regular readers will know that this magazine has had a stormy past. It has changed from being the Newsletter of the Institute of Race Relations, through the earlier phase of concerned liberalism which caused the split from the Institute to its present position of committed radicalism.

In the past, when it was simply about "Race Relations", it was supported and subsidised by grants from industry and commerce. That phase is well and truly over and our position was clearly stated in the first editorial of 1974 :-

Our editorial policy has been formed and shaped out of the conflict of liberal mediation, of whatever colour, and the social forces of black revolt. Our task is to record and recognise the struggles of these newly emerging forces as manifestations of the revolutionary potential of the black population. We recognise too the release of intellectual energy from within the black community which always comes to the fore when the masses of the oppressed by their actions create a new social reality. Race Today opens its pages to the theoretical tendency which seeks to give clarification to the independent grass-roots self-activity with a view to furthering its development.

That is where we stand. If we are to survive and develop, we urgently need to boost our circulation and income to a position where we can stand proudly on our own, independent of the whims of capital. Circulation has shown a very healthy trend, especially over the last six months. And since January alone, we have put on more than a 1,000 sales per issue. This is excellent, but it is just the beginning. We believe that circulation can be doubled within six months, and trebled by the end of the year.

We also believe that money which has in the past been 'donated' by big business can be more than replaced by money genuinely given by readers committed to the survival and growth of this magazine.

This magazine has battled for its life before, and won through with the support of its readers. Now we are calling on you once again to support us and help us to grow. The blunt truth is that if we do not grow massively in circulation and income, we shall die. We print below a list of ways in which you can help, and if Race Today is important to you, if you want it to continue, we ask you for your help. Without it we shall die, and we have no intention of doing that.

The Race Today Collective. April 1974

- 1** Included with all copies of this issue that go out to subscribers are leaflets advertising Race Today with a subscription form. Give these to people who express an interest in the magazine and ask them to subscribe. Subscriptions are most important to us because they mean a regular guaranteed income and that people see every copy instead of relying on the few bookshops that sell us. Subscription forms are a most effective way of building up income and circulation. More of them are available from us.
- 2** Do you belong to any social, political or cultural organisations? Would they include our publicity in their next mail-out. Would you ask on our behalf?
- 3** Display our publicity in prominent places. Notice boards in schools and colleges, factories and offices, halls and clubs are all places where notices or leaflets could be pinned up. A selection of display material is available from us and is very useful in getting the magazine known to a wider audience.
- 4** Keep a sharp eye on events in your locality for us and let us know anything that should be reported in the magazine.
- 5** Become a Fighting Subscriber and pay at least £5.00 per year for your annual subscription instead of £2.00. Fighting Subscribers receive in addition all pamphlets and other publications plus regular invitations to meetings. The extra money goes into the Fighting Fund.
- 6** Take copies of the magazine yourself on a sale-or-return basis and push it for us. Take it to school or college, office or factory, political meeting or cultural event. Become a local distribution centre for us.
- 7** Does your organisation have a newspaper or magazine of any sort? Would they give advertising space to our magazine? Might they be persuaded to do a feature article?
- 8** Form a Race Today support group, or join one if one exists in your area. Groups are already formed in London and Manchester, and there are embryonic groups in Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Bristol. Support groups sell the magazine, hold regular meetings with Race Today speakers and local activists, keep an eye on events in their area. Contact us and we'll put you in touch or help you to form one.
- 9** Send us a donation however small or large and ear-mark it for the Fighting Fund. Take out a Banker's Order - available from us - and make a regular contribution on a quarterly or monthly basis.
- 10** Put on a fund-raising activity on our behalf: it could be a jumble sale or a social, a film show or a concert, a small group from whom you make regular collections or a motion through your union branch or student union.
- 11** If you live in London, could you come into our office and help out on a voluntary basis? We need help with distribution, lay-out and printing, with manning our telephone switchboard and working on our legal advice service. Two spare hours a month would mean a lot to us.
- 12** Find new outlets for us, we are always on the look-out for new places. Bookshops, newsagents, community centres, club premises, student unions, trade union offices are just a few of the places that can be approached. Ask people to take a dozen copies on sale-or-return and then let us know where the new outlets are. Service them yourselves, or we will do it.

Race Today

July 1974 15p

THE STRIKE AT IMPERIAL TYPEWRITERS

Immigrant Workers in the Catering Industry

The Black Prisoner : Backlash

Indian Railway Strike



LETTERS

We welcome letters, but reserve the right to cut them where space problems dictate. Letters for the next issue should reach us by the 1st of July.

Overseas Students Organise Themselves

Comrades,

I am writing to inform you of the struggle being waged by overseas students in this country, a struggle which the National Union of Students has attempted to come to terms with by holding a 'Conference on overseas students/racism' on 25 and 26 May in London. The conference was jointly organised by the NUS and CCOSO (Co-ordinating Committee of Overseas Organisations) to discuss, among other things, the Immigration Act, overseas students' discriminatory fees, and the Race Relations Act. I contend that the conference was a showpiece designed to force a product down our throats without us having ever tasted it.

It is important to note that, although, CCOSO was formed seven years ago, most of the delegates at that conference, including myself, had never even heard of it.

NUS, quite mechanistically, state that they have 'consistently and vigorously opposed the discriminatory fee structure' and 'continually put pressure on the Home Office for the operation of a fair, courteous and efficient immigration procedure for both overseas students and immigrants'. No campaign is ever won over glasses of sherry with the Home Office or the Labour government. The recent increase in grants for British students was achieved through a mass campaign (direct action locally in individual universities and mass demonstrations on a national basis). NUS or CCOSO have never waged a campaign against the discrimination overseas students face in housing, fees and in their right to take full participation in Student Union activities.

The chair-persons at the Conference consistently and persistently refused to accept questions concerning the existence of CCOSO in its present form and in its capabilities for representing the interests of all overseas students. What they really wanted to say was: 'Listen kids, this is CCOSO; it represents you, so take it or get out.' NUS and CCOSO insisted that motions could not be put to the conference to be voted on. On the second day of the conference, and after a lot of pressure, they gave in but made it quite clear that any motions passed at the conference would not even be considered as recommendations to CCOSO. This, and other factors, clearly reveal the undemocratic nature of CCOSO.

One of the motions passed by the conference states, among other things: 'The delegates at this conference strongly object to the presumption that we should accept CCOSO as a representative body

of overseas students', and goes on to say: 'Therefore, we propose that the conference calls on NUS to organise a conference of elected representatives of all overseas students from all colleges to report to NUS on the same grounds as women, gays and post-graduate conferences.' It is significant to note that the only person on the executive of CCOSO who voted for this motion was a black student (the only black student on CCOSO executive).

Overseas students comprise of 14% of the total student population in Britain and their presence is not divorced but interlocked and interweaved with the struggle of the British students. Overseas students, and black students in particular, have been continually pushed round by formal bureaucratic organisations which are never able to express the intensity and degree of our problems, in the same way that the Trade Unions in this country have now become, by and large, an irrelevancy to the struggle of the black people. It is now up to the overseas students to organise themselves to form a body truly representing them, and an initiative in that direction was taken at the conference where most of the delegates decided to form a National Overseas Student Organisation and put pressure on the NUS to recognise this organisation as the official voice of the overseas students. NUS will almost certainly oppose such an organisation, but this is a challenge that all overseas students must be prepared to meet.

Ranjit Singh
Afro-Asian Caribbean Society,
Kent University,
Canterbury.

Preparations For Violence

Sir,

Recent information, from various sources in Leeds, has shown increasing activities by an ultra-right group called the National Democratic Front Movement. This gang is supposed to be a splinter group of the Parent Body, the National Front, and has been functioning for the past two years. During this period, they gave no cause for alarm. But what is disturbing at the moment is their open arrogance in their drive for recruits, and their vow to drive out all blacks and 'alien Jews' out of Britain.

We know from observations, that their members have been training in such 'sports' as karate and rifle shooting, and facilities for both of these activities are not difficult to come by. Some of their members use the University Pistol Club, and Karate is done in the city. Perhaps it is because of the training that they now feel confident and are prepared to come out in the open. Their slogan at the moment is, 'We want people who are willing to use violence', to use

against, no doubt, black people and Jews.

The Jews have organised themselves under a mysterious name called Group 62. The blacks in Chapel Town are already organised and are waiting for the fascists to make their move. So far, they have only been making belicose statements but we recognise that sooner or later, the leaders would have to prove to their members what they are worth.

M. Mohammed.
Leeds.

Who Are The Fascists?

Sister/brother,

I am a member of the National Union of Railwaymen, and as such I am alarmed at the growth of racist/fascist ideas among my brothers. I find your journal a great help in giving me in-depth arguments to fight this propaganda. I have also managed to quote a few of Paul Foot's 'Workers against racism'.

Anyway my problem is I don't know enough about the origins, methods, tactics, and financial backing of organisations like the National Front, Colin Jordan's lackeys and Jim Merrick's gang.

So I would be grateful for as much information as possible on these parasitic racists.

Newman Smith
371 Manchester Rd.
Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

Padmore And The Party

Comrades,

Reader Tom Strokes wants to know what the attitude of the British Communist Party was to the resignation from the Party of George Padmore.

What can the attitude of a revolutionary party be to a member who goes over to the other side? Not having been around at the time I can only guess that there were a lot of hard words said. I should imagine that Padmore was accused of selling out to the enemies of the working class and black liberation. I would also say that this was a fair assessment of Padmore's conduct. Reader Strokes shouldn't be gullible enough to believe Padmore's own judgment of himself. It has become very fashionable to knock 'Stalinism' (whatever that is) and Padmore wasn't the only one to blame 'Stalinism' for his own betrayal of socialism.

A far better assessment of Padmore can be gained from Kwame Nkrumah's books *The Class Struggle in Africa* and *Conscientism*, where Padmore's *African Socialism* is taken apart from a Marxist, scientific socialist point of view. In view

Letters (continued on p. 215).

EDITORIAL

Freedom to Organise

The resolution passed by the National Union of Students at the Annual Conference pledged that racist/fascist organisations should not be given a platform in universities and colleges and directed students to take the necessary action in the implementation of the resolution.

The established press responded with hysterical rejoinders defending freedom of speech, and attacked the students for their 'totalitarian approach'. Several unions in local colleges and universities, with the assistance of outside liberal and conservative organisations and drawing strength from the press attack, reversed the resolution at mass meetings; the result being a possible recall of conference to propose a milder version of the original resolution. The 'freedom of speech' argument appears to have convinced the majority of students who apparently are not prepared 'to sully the fine British tradition for fair play'. For them racism is reduced to a debate in which the best man wins.

This approach poses immediately a glaring contradiction when the principle is applied to their own situation. In recent times students have mobilised themselves in thousands to fight for an increase in grants, to fight against high rents and increased canteen prices. Never once did they entertain a speaker on their platforms who would give voice to an extreme right-wing position against their demands. Here, when their own interests are at stake they recognise that the presence of an extreme right-wing speaker on their platform does not at all relate to the abstract notion of freedom of speech but relates to the concrete situation which gives that speaker the freedom to organise their own defeat.

The fascist/racist speaker is not seeking a platform for debating purposes. The right-wing has a position on the immigrant workers' movement and seeks every opportunity to organise and mobilise for its defeat.

From where does the contradiction originate? It is obvious that students see their own struggles as separate and compartmentalised from the struggles of immigrant workers. Theirs, they believe, is a struggle of the privileged, unrelated to the struggles of 'underprivileged' immigrant workers. Hence they can only make the link in terms of an anti-racist evangelical crusade in which the privileged like missionaries sacrifice themselves for the good and well-being of lesser mortals. Posed in this way they entertain and are swayed by all sorts of liberal penny-a-liners who pose the freedom of speech question, rather than apply to the struggle of immigrant workers the same rules they apply to their own struggles as students.

For black students, there is no question of separating their struggles as students from the struggles of black people in their countries of origin or of black people in the cities of Britain. For them the presence of a Monday Club speaker at the universities and colleges they attend is not a question of freedom of speech but a platform close to home from which their repatriation is being organised.

Events Unfold in Portugal

Spino's problem . . . is that [the Portuguese working class] may continue to seize the time. He will have help to prevent them from doing so from Soares, the Social Democrat, and Cunhal, the Communist. Both were in exile The question for Spino is whether the infrastructure of liberal social control can be built up fast enough by such as these or whether the initiative will pass out of the hands of capital in military or civilian guise.

And so in our last editorial written on 2 May, we were able to give fair warning on the course the counter-revolution would take in Portugal, when faced with a working class movement 'with new possibilities for revolutionary struggle opened to them'. In fact the Portuguese working class did continue to seize the time in a series of strikes and other militant actions since the coup. They walked off their jobs demanding wage increases, fired foremen, expelled management personnel and translated Spino's decree on 'Freedom of Speech' into the freedom to organise. Spino responded with threats of armed intervention 'to prevent anarchy', but not before he was let off the hook by the agents of 'liberal social control', Cunhal and Soares. The *Guardian* correspondent tell us all. Writing from Lisbon on 30 May under the headline, 'Victory for Spino as Strikes End', he proceeds as follows: 'Portuguese trade unions, heeding pleas from the Government and *Socialist and Communist parties* advised workers today to use strikes only as an ultimate weapon and to seek negotiated acceptance of their pay claims.' (Our italics.)

Again in our editorial we went further: 'The liberation movements are now operating from a position of greatly increased power. But they will be under severe pressure not only from abroad by frightened liberals but also from within their own ranks to make a deal with Portuguese capital. The drive of the technocracy within Portugal will give added power to the African stratum, whose participation in the liberation movements ends at liberation from Portugal and does not extend to liberation from capital.'

We may have to wait on the historical record to reveal the role of some African heads of state (and we did not exclude them in our reference to frightened liberals) in pushing the liberation movement to the conference table. Them aside, we now know much more about that African stratum within the colonies themselves. Again the *Guardian* is our source. On 19 May, writing from Beira, the correspondent tells us of the emergence of the Mozambique United Group, G.U.M.O. Their offer of alliance with Frelimo apart, they suggest blockading Rhodesia and South Africa, they demand a one-man, one-vote referendum or else they threaten, they will turn into freedom fighters. Finally they let it out of the bag: 'The choice was not to be Socialists or Communist, but to be Mozambique nationalists.' In short, liberation from Portugal does not extend to liberation from capital.

Our experience as workers in the British colonies coupled with our experience as workers in Britain itself have been of fundamental assistance in clarifying the situation in Portugal and African colonies. What is decisive is whether we have the power to act on what we know. We have been able to apply our experiences to Portugal and the dilemma which now faces the liberation movements. The struggle which the exploited in Portugal and Africa are now making against the forces which stand opposed to them should assist us in the clarification of our struggles here in Britain.

Race Today

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BETWEEN THE LINES

From Within The Factory...

... Ford's, Dagenham

We want to draw attention to the racist policies organised by the Ford Motor Company at Dagenham. The facts have been ignored by the newspapers and 'white' washed by the race industry, but the time has come to do something. We are reporting from the Engine Plant, where Ford's racist policies are being especially organised against Asian workers.

When we talk of racism at Ford's, it's not just an accident. Right from the early days in Detroit, Ford's has been skilled in the use and exploitation of immigrant and migrant workers as a way of enforcing speed-up and keeping down wages. At Dagenham recently we have been seeing a dirty policy in the Engine Plant — and that dirty policy means employing coloured workers, bringing them into the factory, attracted by the so-called high wages (the £47 per week, which is a lie), and then moving them around from job to job so that they cannot resist or organise.

From looking at the TV and the papers, everyone knows that Ford's can't get workers for love nor money. Three weeks ago 70 workers joined the Body Plant, and one week later 80 workers left. Conditions are so disgusting, the work is slavery, and most line workers do not get the magical £47 advertised all over

the press. White workers will hardly touch Ford's now. Most new starters are blacks, and very many are Asian. Ford places many of the Asian workers in the Engine Plant ... and plays tricks on them.

New workers arriving in the Engine Plant are put in the Machine Shop, where there is plenty of overtime, and where you're not tied to an assembly line. This is so as to get them to stay. But when they've settled in, Ford's take them off these jobs and puts them onto the Commercial Line or the OHC line, where there is no overtime, only permanent days. In other words, a wage cut of about £15



for some people. The people who are moved around like this are mainly the Asian workers. It's well known that West Indian workers, if they are provoked, are more likely to take the hammer to hit the foreman. But many of the Asian workers are scared. And the trade unions do nothing about it.

Ford has a tremendous power when the unions do nothing. We have been *trying* to put up a fight, but see no hope of help from the union. For that reason, a lot of blokes just leave. And those who stay have all the cards stacked against them. Ford's main weapon is mobility of labour. The high turnover acts to prevent organisation, because people drop out of Ford's like flies, and don't stay long

enough to build the fight. Also, not only do they move new starters but they also use mobility to move around militants, and make sure that no militant stays in one section for long enough to build a strong section round him that could make a stand.

There are hundreds of cases like this. Immigrants are being threatened and intimidated by Ford's and by this use of mobility. Anyone who makes the slightest resistance is dragged up to Personnel. It happens everyday you are told you're not working hard enough. You must work harder. You are threatened. Personnel is always trying to *push* more production out of you. This is aimed at the Asian worker mainly. As one Indian worker says: 'Most of the white blokes are OK — specially those who have been there for a long time. They're on fixed jobs. They're very friendly with the Staff. They won't do a thing for us.'

Asian workers are frightened. Some, like the Sikhs, are much stronger. But one man says: 'I went to see a friend. He was sitting, crying, at home with his wife and kids. He didn't know where to turn. He said: "God knows what I'm doing."



I'm so much terrified by the foreman. They push you all the time, even push you by hand, to make you work. I don't know what to do. I can't carry on like this." He wanted badly to leave Ford's, but he had only just arrived in London, and didn't know where to turn for work.'

This is terror by Ford's management. It is no accident that this is happening in the Engine Plant, which is hidden right at the heart of the Dagenham complex. There are always security guards roaming around to keep outsiders away. It's like a prison camp. The trouble is that Ford's management tries (and succeeds) to split us. Each department has 3 or 4 informers in it, and they spy on us to pick out anybody who wants to make a fight. We are all split by nationalities. You've got all sorts of people in here — Sikhs, Pakistanis, Singaporis, West Indians, white blokes. If these people could only *unite*, Ford's would be really scared.

From a worker in the Engine Plant mirrored in fighting these conditions.

... Fidelity Radio, West London

Fidelity Radio is an electronic's factory very near Shepherd's Bush that employs about 400 workers. Profits are enormous and recently the company went public. The work force is mainly young, and most of the workers are black. We come from all over London and include many women, some of whom are working their second job. The basic rate is 30p an hour. The factory is blazing hot in the summer, freezing in the winter and the noise is

Come on in to a Ford job!



Ford is where the jobs for semi-skilled men are. Jobs earning over £47 a week. That's with shift allowance and some overtime. Plus nearly four weeks holiday with bonus, pension benefits and special car purchase plan. We'll train you.

So come on in to a Ford job now—if you're South of the River, catch the Ford Ferry from Belvedere straight into the plant.

Do this now!
*Come to Ford's Employment Centre on the New Road (A13),
Belvedere, Kent.

intense. The noise often causes workers to suffer sensory deprivation (compare this with British army torture techniques) and disorientation.

What keeps the factory going smoothly, from the bosses' point of view, is the bonus system. The weekly bonus of each worker is tied to production figures which are evaluated with a system of points that the management controls — so many points for the different radios and gramophones. For a week where there is a lot of overtime, the bonus rises to £12, but it can be only £2 or £3. Basic rates start from £12 for a 40-hour week, lower if you're under 18, and the management does not ask too many questions about age. Any worker who comes late to work loses his/her *whole* bonus for the week. And, of course, overtime is compulsory, in the 'high' months (September-January). Work is 8 am-7 pm (2 hours overtime a day).

One important way management has of keeping the workers divided is by using 50 different basic rates, so no one is prepared to say exactly what they are earning in case it is discovered that they are getting more for the job. Jobs are totally boring and there is no job rotation — you can do exactly the same job for a year.

Fidelity is a family business; it belongs to the Dickman family. Father and sons work there and park their Ferraris and Lamborghinis, with license plates RADIO 1, RADIO 2, etc. outside the entrance to make sure the workers remember who is boss. Dickman senior even sweeps up sometimes to show he is also human.

It is in this situation of slave-like exploitation that Fidelity workers have started the fight back. Our first aim was to bring in a union (the AUEW) and now around half the work force is in the union. Dickman has been forced to recognize the union and so far has made no victimization. Management's strategy, in reply, has been to set up a works' committee in the hope of confusing things. During the elections for the works' committee, the foremen tried to intimidate the workers into voting for non-union candidates. This failed and 5 of the 7 shop-stewards are on the committee — management is also represented.

The first committee demands were for a £12.50 consolidation of the bonus (incorporating it into the basic wage) and a £3.50 straight across the board wage rise. Management replied that a wage rise was out because of an 8p per hour wage rise given in Phase 3 (*their* calculation; they have all the figures). They also said they would not consolidate the £12.50 since that would 'remove all incentive'. They agreed to a £6 consolidation of the bonus (which affects holiday pay and overtime rates) and to a worker being allowed to be late once in a week without losing the bonus. The works' committee put these proposals to an assembly of all workers and they were accepted without everybody understanding them. The militants in the factory are waiting for the end of Phase 3, which will coincide with the high season when management needs to be sure of produc-



Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union London branch demonstrated through the centre of the city 5 May to commemorate members murdered by the Smith's security forces in Rhodesia.

tion. We know that the wages and conditions at Fidelity are terrible, even in comparison with other West London factories.

Management claims that Fidelity has 52% of the transistor market and 48% of the stereo (very little of its output is under the Fidelity brand-name). It has got into this position by a slave-like system of production. The fight to end this has begun.

Brockwell Park Three

The appeal of Lloyd James, Horace Parkinson and Robin Sterling is now being prepared. Defence lawyers, working for nothing, have received the transcripts of the trial from the Old Bailey and are hoping for an early date for a hearing. The Black Peoples' Defence Committee continues to meet and coordinate the raising of funds, whilst a series of meetings have been held in Brixton and beyond to raise support for the three. There is still talk of the possibility of quietly dropping Lloyd James out of the limelight (he faces another charge in the middle of the month), but sections of the youth are not prepared to allow this.

Pulling The Wool Over Their Eyes

The Northern Carpet Trade's Union is not one of the better-known workers' organisations in Britain. Based in Halifax, it's one of the multitude of unions involved in the textile business: its 2,000 plus membership work specifically in the carpet-manufacturing trade and its size and limited geographic location mean

that there is a close proximity between the full-time officer, the workers, and management. Like much of the textile business, a significant number of the workers are Asian immigrants: the work is noisy and demanding, the hours long, and the take-home pay is low. Trade union organisation is at a low level throughout the industry, and while white labour has voted with its feet to refuse the work, Asians have been prepared in the past to put in the long hours that would mean a reasonable wage.

The Avil Works in Boundary Green, Bradford, is one of a number of factories in the Heckmondwike Carpets group. 56 Asian men work there as weavers and creelers, a further two dozen Asian women check and repair the finished carpets, and half a dozen Asian women are employed as winders. The men are employed on a shift system, twelve hours on, twelve hours off, five days a week. They are paid by a complicated arrangement which adds together piecework, day work, cost of living allowance, overtime and something called consolidated, which many of them don't understand but which goes up and down according to production. They might earn from £27 to £35 a week, although since there is no basic hourly rate and straight bonus system, the variations in wage are hard to fathom out.

JUST OUT:
The MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP's
new report:

THE NAMIBIANS OF
S.-W. AFRICA

45p (53p post free) from MRG
36 Craven St., London WC2.

When the three-day week finished, which was when management had introduced the twelve hour shifts, the men started to agitate for higher wages, led by workers on the night shift. Management prevaricated, and pointed out that they'd paid a £2.50 per week wage rise in December. The men said that they were still working the twelve-hour shift system and thus putting in an extra eight hours a week. Management offered to negotiate after a work study programme had been carried out, and the men agreed to this.

For two weeks, men with stopwatches timed and checked and counted and calculated. Three weeks after they had gone, towards the end of April, the men once again started grumbling. Some of them returned their pay slips and demanded to know what was happening to the agreement. Men on the dayshift started an over-time ban, and carried it out for one day before being threatened with the sack. They were supported by the night shift, who sent three delegates to management to demand a rise. Management attempted to sack them, but the whole shift downed tools and threatened to walk out: the next day Mr. L.R. Smith, union full-timer (chairman of the Race Relations Conciliation Committee, 21 years as Senior Officer of the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers) hurried along to sort it out. He pointed out to the men that they were in breach of all his carefully negotiated agreements with the factory, and with the government's statutory policies on pay, hustled them back to work and did a nifty deal with management to gain a magnificent 1% rise for anomalies for certain workers.

Less than a fortnight later, on Tuesday, 14 May, the night shift decided they had had enough and sat in the canteen: when the day workers turned up, they joined them and tried to persuade the women to support the stoppage.

Despite the fact that the women worked harder for less money, they decided to go back to work while the men continued their sit-in. This state of affairs continued all week, with management promising the men a new work study programme if they would go back and the men saying they'd had enough work study and it was time for more wages. On Friday morning, Mr. Smith eventually turned up, told the men they were once again breaking all his agreements, told the younger workers they were intimidating the older ones, attempted to mediate, get the men back to production and behave with responsibility, and left it to the company to issue notices of dismissal. The white workers, most of them in supervisory grades, continued to work normally.

Over the weekend and on the next Monday, the shop steward, R.M. Iqbal, who is also a member of the National Committee, joined with the full-timer in trying to get the men back to work. A mass meeting of the strikers rejected this, despite the added presence of the managing director, demanding instead a lowering of the working week to 48 hours and a minimum of £29 for day men and £43

for night workers. 'The management have told us to go back,' said Mohammed Ayub, unofficial spokesman and one of Mr. Smith's 'irresponsible youngsters'. 'It looks as though we shall all pick up our cards on Friday and leave because the union only repeats statements made by the management and is not backing our action. The management didn't come up with anything last time, and we don't trust them now.' Mr. Smith, of course, didn't see it that way at all. 'The men are being led by young people who have very little service and are misunderstanding the situation,' he proclaimed.

But by the Tuesday evening, the strike began to collapse. Some of the night shift went back to work, having gained the impression from the shop steward that the strike had been settled without a mass meeting. By Wednesday, the day shift was trickling back as well. The management took the opportunity to sack the rest of the leading strikers and by the end of the week the place was back to normal.

'Heckmondwike Carpets is a lively, well run, profitable firm,' Mr. Smith told us, 'and carpets is the second highest paid section in the textiles group. There's a communication problem really. The immigrants tend to stick together in a community, and when they hear that someone else has had a pay rise, they think they should get one too. They didn't realise that there are still statutory pay limits; they're a bit naive really, some of them don't know what a statute is. I had just negotiated a procedural agreement with the company and less than two months later, they went and broke it. The older men, some of them have put in fifteen years' service. It's the younger ones, the ones educated here, they haven't eased the situation. They just cock a snook at the establishment. They even swear at the foreman in English. I tell them to let off steam in their own language.'

Heckmondwike Carpets, the Race Relations Board and the National Joint Committee are very lucky to have Mr. Smith working for them. Not so the men. But they, especially the 'irresponsible youngsters', will have to deal with that.

Immigration Sellout

Mary Dines writes:

When the Labour Government took office on 1 March, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, which was trying to deal with some of the more nightmarish aspects of the 1971 Immigration Act, hoped there would be some change of policy at the Home Office.

It has become clear, however, that the numbers game is still being played and that Labour do not intend to repeal any part of the 1971 Act. Instead they intend to damp down increasing criticisms about the administration of immigration control by 'humanising' the situation. Methods used to do this will include an increase of staff at overseas posts, where there is already a two-year queue for the interviews for dependants, the implementation of existing powers to release people on interim permits at ports of entry, and

compassionate consideration of deportation cases. Above all, they will encourage the Home Office's baby, the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service, to expand their advisory services overseas and will soften up the governments concerned to accept them.

It is significant that JCWI, which has constantly declared its opposition to any accommodation with racist laws, now faces a serious financial crisis. Its early demise would no doubt be welcomed, especially by Messrs. Callaghan and Ennals at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who will be aware of JCWI's continued hostility to the patriality clauses introduced by them in the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act and who have always wanted to squeeze JCWI out. Artful liberals, moreover, are more dangerous than Tories. This makes it more important than ever that JCWI survives.

Strike Round-Up

After the crushing blow delivered by the Industrial Tribunal, which absolutely dismissed all applications to it by Perivale Gutterman's Asian workforce (see *Race Today*, March, April, May 1974), the strike has collapsed. Gutterman's said they would take workers back on an individual basis, but the men would not accept that: most of them have found new jobs, although some of the leading members found themselves blacklisted amongst local employers.

Despite the previous decision, the men have all put in money to take the firm to appeal at the National Industrial Relations Court privately: the hearing is due at the end of June. The factory continues normal production, but already there are rumblings from the new work-force. They say that wages have dropped and that they haven't received their threshold agreements. The struggle has simply changed shape, but it obviously continues.

* * * *

The strike by Asian labourers at Coventry Art Castings (*Race Today*, March 1974), which was sparked off by an arbitrary sacking and grew into a demand to break the wage differential between themselves and white workers, has finally ground to a halt. The men eventually went back to work after four and a half months: some of them accepted redundancy pay rather than face the horrors of the situation, while most of them went back in together to organise for another day. Many of the blacklegs are still working at the factory. Balbir Singh, who accepted redundancy pay rather than the sack, took up a job with Coventry Corporation Transport. While employed there, he received a suspended sentence for assaulting an Asian policeman from his time on the picket line at Art Castings. The Transport Department promptly sacked him for having a police record.

* * * *

The strike by Asian workers at the North London plastics firm of Punfield and Barstow has also collapsed with the closure of the plant. The men have dispersed to other jobs in the area.

NEWS BACKGROUND

European Immigrant Workers: More Money, Less Work

A massive influx of immigrants from the rural areas of Europe – Southern Italy, Northern Spain, Yugoslavia, Portugal and Turkey – has been the latest addition to the labour force in Britain. The Common Agricultural Policy of the Common Market and the importation of cheaper foodstuffs from Latin America have both served to decimate agricultural production in many rural areas of Europe. The displaced peasants have made their way to the industrial cities of Frankfurt, Milan and Turin, and, more recently, they have arrived in large numbers to Britain where they are employed mainly in the catering industry. In 1971 alone the Home Office granted 41,300 work permits to European immigrant workers to perform menial tasks on a temporary basis, chiefly in hotels, as chambermaids and cooks, and in restaurants, as waiters. Illegal agencies thrive by charging the newly-arrived immigrant worker fees of up to £50 to secure a work permit. Chambermaids, porters, cooks, dishwashers, kitchen porters, boilermen and cleaners are paid wages ranging from £14.50 to £21 a week. They work on weekends and up to 10.30 pm without any addition to the wage.

These conditions contributed to the attraction of large amounts of capital into the catering industry, as evidenced by the growth of new hotels in the West London area. The Grand Metropolitan Hotels, owned by Maxwell Joseph, declared profits of £50,576,000 in the last six months of 1973. As the profits mount, so too the resistance of the workers in the catering industry.

Two years ago the T&GWU responded to the stirrings of discontent within the work force by opening an International Branch. 1,700 workers responded. More than that, faced with the possibility of mass membership in the T&G, management at the Grand Metropolitan made a deal with the General and Municipal Workers' Union that the latter would have the monopoly of organising workers within their chain. The T&G were partners to this agreement.

After a few minor skirmishes at hotels in the London area, the Washington Hotel, Mayfair (owned by Maxwell Joseph), erupted. Antonio, a kitchen worker, refused to cook meat that had gone off for the rest of the staff. It was not the first time that management had attempted to serve rotten meat to the workers. Antonio was threatened with the sack and 30 kitchen workers walked out. Antonio was earmarked for victimisation because he recruited for the international branch of the T&G. However, two weeks

before the strike, the deal was made with the GMWU which the workers accepted. The workers held a meeting with an official of the GMWU where the following demands were put forward:

- £2 a week rise for everybody;
 - One month's paid vacation per annum;
 - More humane treatment;
 - Better food;
 - Reduce the work of chambermaids from 18 to 12 rooms per day;
 - Reduce the work load from 45 to 40 hours a week.
- In short, they wanted more money for less work.

Mr. Rompt of the GMWU ignored the demands, then having agreed to them at a subsequent meeting, sided with management in the final showdown. The workers went on strike and the Union refused to make it official. In the other Grand Metropolitan hotels the workers have had the same experiences with trade union representatives.

Turkish workers at the Wimpy restaurants, who worked a 100 hour week for little more than £25, then went on strike. In one week they shut all the restaurants down. Having won most of the demands, one worker commented:

We have had a hard fight, but the hardest fight was against Union officials. We are very bitter that we got so little after such a successful strike. The Union didn't seem interested in us at all. We were only allowed 5 minutes with the District Official of the union to explain our case. Many of the workers are going to leave the union. We have organised together and we know now how strong we are. Things can never be the same again.

Following the experiences at the hands of union officials, workers at the Washington Hotel, the Wimpy, Mount Royal Hotel and the Flemming have organised themselves into action committees at each hotel and restaurant to fight for overall demands. They call it, 'The Hotel Workers' Platform for action and organisation on a mass level . . .' and have stated that

above all, the necessity of a contract for the whole category of catering workers is important for bringing about a process of unification among the various categories of workers in the industry, as well as between the different types of businesses they work in (hotel, canteens, restaurants, etc.) and the different companies – large and small.

They are demanding:

£35 for a 40 hour week for the entire sector as basic starting wage. Guaranteed wage increases at the same rate as price increases;

A maximum of 40 hours a week for all, 8 hours daily, including 1 hour for lunch and two coffee breaks of 20 minutes each. Split of shift duty to be compensated by an increase of 50% on the basic rate;

50% on the basic for night work after 10.30 pm;

100% on the basic for weekend work. 4 hours off for every 6 hours of weekend work;

4 weeks holiday with full pay after 6 months work, or in case of dismissal by the employer. In the case of resignation the right to holiday pay in proportion to the number of months worked;

Full pay while off sick;

Fresh food to be inspected by the health inspector;

The quantity of work to be done by each worker in 8 hours must be decided by an assembly of workers;

The right of workers to hold an assembly on the premises at any time whenever a delegate or group of workers sees the need.

The task of organising and mobilising for these demands is made more difficult by the fact that workers face deportation at the whim of management and the Home Office, by the fact that management spies attend meetings and report on the details to management, and finally by the active opposition of the trade union bureaucracy.

Written in association with the Action Committee.



Indian Railway Strike

Gautam Appa reports on the recent Railwaymen's strike in India and explains how the strikers were crushed into submission.

In many ways the strike by the Indian railwaymen resembles the latest strike of miners in Britain. But in order to understand this one needs to know more than can be gleaned from the British press.

The Indian Trade Union movement has developed quite differently from its British counterpart. Trade unions in India are closely linked with different political parties. Two of the biggest, All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), are led by the communists and the ruling Congress party, respectively. But all the other national parties dabble in organised labour work, with varying degrees of success. Among the railway workers there are many unions, connected to different parties. About one hundred were involved in the strike and, barring those affiliated to INTUC, they formed the Co-ordinating Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle, with a social democrat, George Fernandez, as its convener. The Committee launched the struggle which was confined to *economic issues only*. The pressure from the INTUC rank and file to support the railwaymen was immense, and when the struggle began not only did many nominal members of that union join, but were arrested as well.*

Party loyalties break easily in a class struggle! The most 'reasonable', cautious and *compromise-seeking people* in this struggle turned out to be the union leaders and the leaders of the so-called leftist parties. The union leaders kept on trying to find a way to avoid strike action even when it became quite clear that the government was only playing at nego-

tiations. Fernandez constantly pledged to do his utmost to avert a strike, even after he was arrested on 2 May. Though no one could claim that he wasn't warned of this eventuality. He was on record as early as 23 April of alleging that he had information that in spite of the assurances of Mr. Mishra, the Railway Minister, that railwaymen would not be arrested while the negotiations were pending, all members of the union and yard council executive at Bondamunda on the South Eastern Railway had been arrested under the notorious Defense of India Rule.

The opposition parties expressed anger and made a noise in parliament. But what did they have to offer? Dange, the leader of the Moscow-supported Communist Party, was in dire trouble. On the one hand, his party's declared policy is not to rock Indira's boat because of 'the threat from the right'. On the other hand, his party is still called the Communist Party of India. Dange suggested *an inquiry* — yet another act of prevarication, in complete accord with their policy of 'aligning with the progressive forces in the Congress', their anti-people marches in Bihar and scores of other acts that makes it impossible to distinguish them from the ruling clique. The leaders of the non-communist left parties also tried to find formulae, in a desperate attempt to avoid a class confrontation. They failed because of the determination of the ruling class to crush the struggle.

Conciliation was not on because the economy is in shambles. Starvation is not new in India but since the technological successes of the 'Green Revolution' it is even less tolerable. Continually spiralling food prices led recently to a mass uprising in one of the quietest states, Gujarat. Bihar followed suit. Since then every single state in India has had what the government calls a 'food riot'. So the government had to have a scapegoat. 'We would not yield to railwaymen in order to stop inflation' was the tactic. It was apparently a minor point that within only the previous few months the government had permitted a 37.5% rise in cloth prices, had given a rebate in sugar and excise concessions on jute, and had raised procurement prices of foods.

Before the strike began the Government cancelled hundreds of schedules — to give the public a foretaste of the hardships. The national press started a familiar chorus, printing horror stories of the likely damage to the national economy, and pointing out how ineffectual a strike would be. When the strike started the papers were full of ministerial stories of

how everything was normal, and scare stories of sabotage and arson. The arrests of pickets, the evictions of families, the beating of women demonstrating about police brutality and the army occupations of their living quarters were all played down. And then, finally, a diversion came in handy. India exploded the bomb. Bang! All the party leaders were euphoric. And the government took the opportunity to rob the strikers of their earnings. It found legal reasons to withhold their wages for the *previous month!* The workers were starved back into submission.

The similarities with the miners' strike are there for all to see. The struggle was an economic one. The leaders were the least inclined to wage it. The Tories in Britain also allowed price rises and then tried to put the blame on the workers by picking a fight with the miners. The press was full of scare stories and the 'national interest' and statistics manipulated to substantiate the government case.

Yet the Indian strike is also quite unique. It was the longest held by any group of workers in India. The repression was severe — 50,000 arrests, families evicted, electricity and water supplies to workers' quarters cut, and their wages robbed. But the resistance was just as stubborn. Thousands of women from workers' families went out in processions, patrolled the quarters and fought the police. Workers laid down on the tracks to stop the army from moving the trains. Many non-railway people also helped, and were arrested. The weapon of the general strike was used in support of the railwaymen on 15 May.

The strikers were defeated due to economic pressure. But their defeat is ominous because it shows that the India government is acting ruthlessly, out of fear. It fears the hungry masses. It cannot allow any organised mass movement to succeed. Any mass resistance meets the same harsh treatment. In Gujarat over a hundred were shot dead and hundreds more arrested. The Communist Party of India (M-L) met the same undemocratic, desperate response when it tried to organise the peasants. Hundreds of them were killed in the 'search and destroy' missions and 'police encounters'. Thousands are still in jails without being charged. Like all bourgeois democracies the liberal face of the ruling class in India is a facade. The economic situation, and especially the food crisis, is so acute that the mask can no longer be kept on. The railway men have ripped away the 'socialist' and democratic pretensions of the Congress Party.

*The only Indian union recognised by the TUC in Britain is the government-sponsored INTUC. When approached by the Indian Workers' Association (G.B.) to condemn the arrests of trade unionists in India, the TUC's response was: 'We only recognise INTUC. As the INTUC has not asked us for help we could not interfere. In any case the situation is very complex, and requires careful study before any statement is made . . .'. We had a much warmer reception from Ray Buxton, the General Secretary of ASLEF. He issued a press statement immediately, and wrote to the TUC using it to take some action. On receiving the letter the international section of the TUC rang us. This time they wanted more facts. As far as we know they are still studying facts. While their class brothers were under lock and key, the British TUC's leaders were cultivating scholastic interests!

The Strike at Imperial Typewriters

Mala Dhondy

'The workers have not followed the proper disputes procedure. They have no legitimate grievances and it's difficult to know what they want. I think there are racial tensions, but they are not between the whites and the coloureds. The tensions are between those Asians from the sub-continent and those from Africa.'

'This is not an isolated incident, these things will continue for many years to come. But in a civilised society, the majority view will prevail. Some people must learn how things are done...' — George Bromley, 30 years a Transport and General Workers' union negotiator, JP and stalwart of the Leicester labour party.

Leicester, so we are told, is one of the richest cities in Europe. Isolated from the industrial turmoils associated with declining heavy industries, its economic base is built on solid foundations in footwear, textiles and light engineering. Despite its labour council, it is a deeply conservative town, valuing the old-fashioned virtues of hard-work and thrift, self-interest and parochialism. It has little tradition of industrial struggle, it's the kind of city where the 'social contract' might have been invented. It's a National Front stronghold — 9,000 votes polled in the last election — and at the height of the Ugandan Asian exodus in 1972, the City Council took out a full-page advert

in the Ugandan press to stress the city's 'Red Area' status and warn off the East African refugees from settling in the city with its 'overburdened schools and inadequate housing'.

Towards the end of the sixties and throughout the seventies, the original Asian immigrant workers have been joined by refugees from East Africa. Some of the more astute arrivals brought with them enough capital from business enterprises to set themselves up with a house and a stake in distributive trades. Most of them, who had occupied the middle range of the colonial economic set-up in Africa, located between the white imperialists and the black workers and peasants, had been clerks and storemen, small shopkeepers and petty servants of the state. They arrived from a certain position of minor status in Africa with little more than they stood up in and the name and address of a friend or relative. With no tradition of industrial organisation, often with a minimal grasp of English, they appeared ideal material for capitalist discipline in the factories of Leicester.

Huddled together in the Highfield area are many of the city's new inhabitants, mainly Asian, but with a scattering of West Indian families among them. Move on past Spinney Hill Park, drop down onto East Park Road and you find yourself at the main gate of Imperial Typewriters' factory. This is the old building,

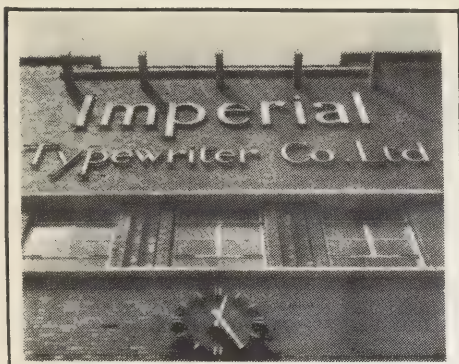
and together with the new plant, a quarter of a mile away at Copdale Road, 1,600 people work here normally producing manual and electric typewriters for the European market. Of the 1,600 people, approximately 1,100 are Asians.

On Wednesday 1 May, the traditional workers' day, four firms in the city were hit by walk-outs. 300 workers walked out of British United Shoe Machinery, another 300 struck at the Bentley Group and a further 200 walked out of the GEC factory at Whetstone. On the same day, 39 Asian workers left Section 61 of the Imperial Typewriter factory. All the other workers were soon back inside, but the handful from Imperial stayed out and then managed to bring out a further 500 with them. Within a fortnight production was down to 50% of normal, and by the end of May, as the strike dragged into its fifth week, very few typewriters were coming off the lines at all.

The picket line has been manned constantly since the day of the walk-out. But it's not like a normal English worker's picket line with a couple of placards and half a dozen of the men turning back the lorries. This is a major industrial dispute involving Asian workers from East Africa, and it has a vivacity and style to it that makes it unique. The picket line is manned constantly by anything from 50 to 200 workers. Whenever a scab or management representative appears, a



On the picket line, the women have played a leading role. Whooping, hollering, a formidable noise.



The Leicester factory : just one of 1,660 plants spread across the globe

fearful yowling and hollering is set up, led invariably by the women who have been stalwarts on the line since the day the strike started. The noise is tremendous and very effective as it echoes across the street and between the high buildings. Sheltering in nearby cafes and the launderette when it rains, constantly moved on by the police when it's fine, the pickets stand there undaunted by the immovable position of the union — who refuse to make the strike official — and the hostility of the indigenous working class population. A new element has emerged amongst the strikers: young, long-haired, golden-eared, bedimmed and brown-skinned, they are fearless and energetic. They have no qualms about attacking the National Front, checking the police (Leicester Police Force has an East African Asian on its strength who is used to control the picket line and interpret for the other men: he is a particular target for the youth) and their attitude towards the blacklegs is a powerful hostility. The state has been worried for some time about controlling a similar element amongst West Indian youth. Imperial Typewriters has shown the emergence of a similarly energetic force amongst Asian youth.

The 27 women and 12 men who walked out on 1 May all came from Section 61. Their task was to assemble parts manufactured in Japan, Germany and Holland into complete typewriters: for this they were paid £18 per week for women workers on piecework and £25 for men. In addition to this basic, they were supposed to receive bonus rates: the daily target in that section had been set at 200 machines per day. For some months, there had been discontent throughout the factory at the fact that, despite the number of Asian workers employed, the shop stewards' committee was overwhelmingly white, with the exception of one Asian shop steward. Company policy had been to speed up the line and thus the rate of production. The workers in Section 61 felt that the quotas of production allocated to white workers and to themselves were imbalanced, and that the struggles being waged by them were not merely unsupported but were actively opposed by their union

They demanded their own shop-steward, to be elected by their section, who would not just negotiate on the question of production and bonuses, but also on all the important restrictions that made up their daily working lives compared to those of white workers — washing time, tea breaks, lunch breaks, toilet breaks and so on. In the course of their demands to Reg Weaver, the T&GWU factory convenor, they found out that although they were being paid bonus on a target of 200 or more, they were in fact entitled to bonus on 168 (an agreement that dated back to 1972, and would have meant an extra £4 per week). It was this discovery, heaped on top of management's oppressive organisation of production, that sparked off their walk-out.

By 3 May, the small nucleus of workers from Section 61, who had been led by women workers and who had revealed their unofficial leaders — 21-year-old Hasmukh Khetani and N.C. Patel — had leafletted and picketted the two sections



The National Front, of course, intervened.

of the factory so successfully that 500 other workers came out and joined them for a meeting in nearby Spinney Hill Park. The original 40 had demanded that their bonus, out of which they had been fiddled, should be backdated to January 1973, and that new rates should now be negotiated on the basis of their present position.

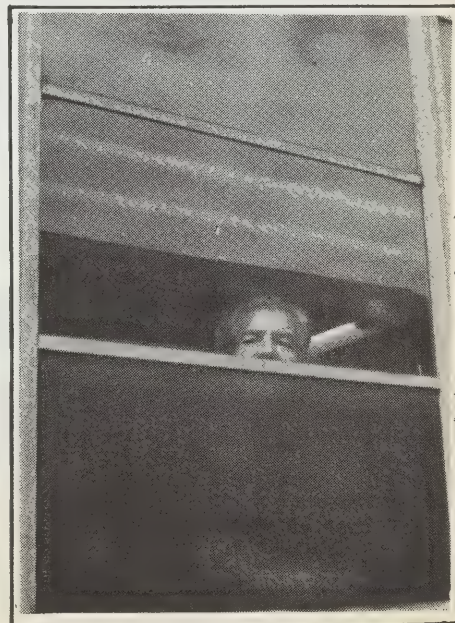
But as the strikers were joined by more people from the factory, the realisation of their collective power grew. They demanded an end to the use of racialism by management to divide workers. They called for democratic elections in the trade union. They stood by their demand for back-dated bonus payments. The company's response was swift and positive. They issued notice to the original 40 that if they didn't return to work, they would all be sacked.

Over that first weekend, the local MP, Tom Bradley, who is himself president of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association, intervened in the dispute and tried to negotiate the workers back, saying: 'I told the strike leaders they were getting nowhere by walking the streets and urged them to adopt the proper procedure by returning to work and resuming discussions under an independent chairman.' He was supported by Reg Weaver, the

T&G local convenor. The workers rejected it 100% and stood by their demands. They also called for support from all workers at the factory, black and white. 'Rebalancing the line will mean harder work for less money,' they said. 'Therefore our fight is for all workers, men and women, black and white, for all who work at Imperial.'

By 7 May, the factory was down to 50% of its normal production, and more than 500 of the workers were out on strike. Free from the bureaucratic rules and regulations of the union organisation, the workers have been inventing and creating new ways and means of building a powerful strike organisation to further their struggle. They have come up with 'the grievance meeting', a mass meeting of the strikers in which they all voice their individual grievances. These sessions are taped and the central strike committee then translate the tapes into a coherent series of demands. In this way, the leadership is continually in a close and vibrant relationship with the mass of the strikers. Among the streams of grievances to come forward from sections all over the factory are bonus disputes, clocking on fiddles, waiting time arguments and dozens of similar items collected by the strike committee and published in the bulletin.

Nine days after the walk-out, the company had sacked 75 of the original strikers, but the workers refused to accept their cards and instead sent them back. They also drew up a list of demands to be negotiated with the company. Imperial claimed they were willing to talk, but Reg Weaver blocked the process, saying he was ready to talk to any except the two men, Khetani and Patel, who had actually been thrown up as leaders. Mr. Bromley 'discovered' a T&GWU rule that people could not be elected as shop stewards until they had been at the factory for two years: a novel contribution to



A blackleg looks out of the window.

Who are Imperial Typewriters?

Imperial Typewriters were established in 1908. By 1960, they were turning in an annual profit of £571,000 and in addition to the plant in Leicester with its factories and prestigious head office, they had acquired smaller premises in Hull. The company's fortunes suffered a down-turn through the sixties: management blamed foreign competition, chiefly from the Far East, which was breaking into Imperial's markets with cheaper and more reliable machinery. In 1965, annual profit had dropped to £360,000 and by 1966 it was down to £267,000. The company's shares, which had stood at a book value of 23/- in 1960 had by 1966 dropped to 16/3d. In the age of international monopoly capital, the single firm was no longer able to compete.

While Imperial had been growing and prospering through the fifties and early sixties, across the Atlantic in Delaware in the United States, Litton Industries, incorporated in 1953, was growing and expanding and was now on the lookout for access to cheaper labour and new markets. Litton moved into the British market in 1961, when it took over London Office Machinery. By 1966, Litton stood poised to move in to the British typewriter market. It was already well-established in the States with its own brand, Royal, but it too was feeling the wind of competition from the Japanese and needed to move production from expensive Delaware to a source of cheaper labour. In 1966, Litton put in a bid for Imperial at a share price of 16/3d. Management were in favour of the bid, but a rump of patriots and British capitalists, led by Tory bright boy Toby Jessel (who now heads up the mammoth Jessel Securities), tried to stop the bid, claiming that shareholders were not getting the full price for their shares. For what Litton had managed to achieve, after a full valuation of the company's assets, was to bring down the share price again, to 12/6d. Jessel and his group lost out, and for a total price of £1.9m, Litton bought 100% control of a business whose property assets alone were worth £1.7m. 'The future prospects for the company are bright,' said Chairman R.M. Evans. 'If we seize this opportunity and if everyone cooperates to the full, it will mean hard work. We shall all have to be ready to adapt ourselves to new tasks.'

Litton International is now the second largest typewriter company in the world — second only to IBM. It has a controlling interest in Olympic business machines, and has bought up Triumph and Adler typewriters. In 1972, it owned 267 major manufacturing plants

and laboratories and 1,393 facilities in 31 countries. Its major areas of interest are in Business systems and equipment, professional services and defence and marine works. It builds the navigation and control systems for the United States Army, Air Force and Navy, and manufactures the digital data processing systems for the tactical command and control of airborne, marine and ground weapons systems. In 1972, it had an annual turnover of \$2,476,623,000.

So large is Litton's share in the typewriter and office machine trade, that in May 1973, the Federal Trades Commission ordered it to sell off its Triumph-Adler subsidiary since the FTC said it was 'eliminating the competition'. Litton have said they will appeal, and since this is a process that takes five years, Litton are good for a few more typewriters yet.

Once Litton had established firm control over Imperial, they lost little time in moving much of their production to Europe. Working through a subsidiary, Litton International SA which is based in the financial haven of Switzerland, they turned Imperial from a public company back into a private one, thus making sure that its accounts were not open to

This is presented by
MISS. M. PARKAR:
who is employed by Imperial Typewriter Company

It is to be presented to the nearest law enforcement officer if physical violence is threatened or this person is intimidated as an employee of Imperial Typewriter Company.

Emergency Telephone: 999
Police Telephone: 20845

IMPERIAL TYPEWRITER CO LTD. 8TH MAY 1974

The company handed out protection forms for blacklegs to show to police.

public scrutiny. They then set up their typewriter and office machines thrust into Europe, using factories in Holland, Germany and Japan in addition to those in Hull and Leicester. In 1972, they told their workers in Hartford, Connecticut, that due to the 'years-long, continuing and competitive pressure from low cost and foreign-made typewriters', they were moving production of typewriters to Europe. Then, with the assistance of the Engineering Industry Training Board and the British Government, the tools and machinery were flown across the Atlantic and installed in Leicester and Hull. The number of people employed by the company doubled during the five years from 1968 to 1972, increasing from 1,900 to 3,800. Until 1968, Imperial was an all-white firm. Since that time, recruitment has been largely of Asian workers.

Throughout the strike, George Bromley has referred to the need to keep the company going. For example his letter to the strikers: 'You are ill-led and have done nothing but harm to the company, the union and yourselves.' There has been constant talk of the company pulling out of Leicester and leaving the workers unemployed (Michael Stamper, the Director of the East Midlands Engineering Employers

Association said on 13 May that the Association feared that Litton would be faced with two courses of action: cut back the numbers employed in Leicester, or close the site altogether.) Yet when we examine what little financial data is available from the company, a disturbing picture emerges.

Turnover in the period 1968-1972 has more than trebled from £3,346,000 to £10,762,000. The number of workers has doubled. Thus the surplus value generated per worker in that period alone has shot up by more than 50%. And since 1972, productivity per worker has again increased enormously as bonus levels have been renegotiated downwards, women have been increasingly employed and cheap labour turned to more and more frequently. Yet over the same period, the company has claimed an increasing loss, according to the figures lodged at Companies House — in 1970, a loss of over half a million pounds; in 1972, a staggering £2,938,000. Yet over the same financial year, £6.4m of the turnover was exported, and £4.6m of that went to other companies within the Litton group. (Imperial is estimated to have about 40% of the UK typewriter market.)

There are two possible explanations for this apparent contradiction. The first is the official one in the company's own public relations effort: that the enormous losses over the period in '70-'72 represent the cost of transferring the operation to Britain. The second explanation is that the shifting about internationally of capital and finance within a multinational group is as simple as the shifting of resources and finished goods. If the tax position in the United Kingdom is such that it is more profitable to make the goods at an apparent loss in one country, and then ship them at uneconomic rates to another country and another firm within the group, then the multinational will do so. The data available in London doesn't tell us one way or the other — the data locked up in the financial centres in Switzerland probably does, but will never be publicly available. Litton Industries itself returned an operating profit in the States of 2.54% in 1970 rising to 2.90% in 1972.

Having drawn attention to the 'outside influences disturbing the excellent industrial relations', Michael Stamper went on to say that, 'the workers are represented by Mr. George Bromley, who is a tough but most capable negotiator, well able to look after their interests'. In this unholy alliance between the union full-timer and the employers' representative, we see the political blindness that the workers have exposed. Imperial's Leicester factory is just a small dot on the world map hanging in Litton's Beverley Hills offices. Company chairman Glen MacDaniel would move out of Leicester and into another part of the globe which contains pockets of cheap labour as soon as his company accountant tells him to. But what he needs is access not just to cheap labour, but also to the European market, which his various European bases give him.

shop floor democracy. Jack Jones later repudiated this nonsense. In this state of deadlock, with the company offering a bit of money and claiming that harassment was used to keep the workers out of the factory, the level of demonstrations moved up. Mass picketing and a strike meeting was broken up by police. The strikers at Imperial realised the enormity of the task they have undertaken. They began by sending out an appeal to several other factories belonging to the same branch of the T&GWU. Four factories, with a large Asian membership, responded with donations to the strike fund and a pledge of a 24 hour stoppage at their work place if and when needed. Pressure on their managements will be pressure on their union. Race and a sense of community have so far been the strikers' only power base.

On Sunday, 19 May, the strike committee called a mass meeting and demonstrated through Highfield. More than 2,000 turned up in an impressive display of militant solidarity. As the strike dragged into its third week, with half of the workers staying in the factory, and production slowed to a trickle, with little positive support from other sections of the movement, and with six of the workers facing fines of £315 for obstruction and assault on the police, the Race Relations Board intervened. Invited by Benny Bunsee, the Board stated its intention to carry out a preliminary investigation. The Union officials welcomed it, the factory welcomed it. The workers were not so sure: they felt that it was slow and tardy. George Bromley had himself been a founder member of the East Midlands Conciliation Committee of the Board, but had resigned 18 months earlier due to pressure of work. Towards the end of the month, with most of the workers ineligible for social security, despite demonstrations outside the office, and with most of them having been 'officially sacked' by the company, the strikers rejected the intervention of the Race Relations Board. 'It's a toothless Bulldog', they said. Having dispensed with the mediators, the local MP and the RRB, David Stephen of the Runnymede Trust proposed another — Michael Foot, Minister of Employment. This has so far been ignored.

We attended one of the Grievance Meetings and listened to several men and women describing life at Imperial. This woman is a widow and the mother of three children. She joined Imperials three years ago at a base wage of £13.50:

I assemble motors in the store department. When I first started work here I had to make 14 motors per hour. But then they raised the target to 16 and then to 18 and so on. Now it's 22. To work at that speed we can't even drink a cup of tea. We have no official tea break but sometimes one of us goes out and gets tea for the others. But then if the Foreman sees us he starts complaining about us in front of all

the other workers, and even the supervisor, saying we always waste time and talk too much. Anyway, we didn't complain about that. We complained to them about the target — we all said 22 is too high. However hard we work we can never make more than that — and unless we make more we don't get any bonus.

But on top of that if we make less than 22 — say 20 or 21 — they cut some money from our basic pay We are mostly all Asian in our section but our shop steward is a white woman. She doesn't care and the Union doesn't care. I pay 11p a week to be a member of the Union but I really think it's a waste of hard-earned money. Don't get me wrong. I'm not against Unions — but our Union is no different from Management. And our shop Steward, she hardly ever talks to us. One day she told me she was going to a meeting with some other stewards but I know she went to the hairdressers. I'm sure the Supervisor also knew but he never said anything to her. She comes and goes as she likes. We can't see any difference between her and the supervisor. Yet she is with the Union and he is with Management. She didn't come out on strike with us — she didn't even want to hear about it. There's another one just like her in my friend's department.

I'll give you another example. I went to our shop steward one day and explained that the 22 target was too high. I also told her that the supervisor had asked us to oil our own machines that morning. Normally the machines are oiled before we come in. I told her that oiling was not our job and that management was always trying to make us do more work for the same pay. She told me not to make a fuss over such a small thing. That's the kind of Shop Steward she is. This is why we must have our own shop stewards. In this factory there are 1,100 of us and yet we only have one Asian shop steward. It doesn't make sense, does it? I'm not saying that all Asians will make good shop stewards — some of our people are also like the white people — they take their side — Management's side against us. But this way we are not represented at all

The other day I went to the toilet. Someone was already inside so I had to wait. I must have been there not more than ten minutes when the Foreman started banging on the door. He had come to find me in the toilet to tell me to go back to work. I was very angry and shouted some rude things at him. Wouldn't you? There's a limit to everything. When I came out he asked me what I had been doing there. I told him to go home and ask his wife what she did in the toilet. He complained about me to the supervisor I have so many grievances like this. Small things but they all add up. The other thing is that every morning when we come to work at 8 o'clock we have to stand in a long queue to clock in. I try and come at 5 to 8 because we are paid according to time. Many of us have noticed that the white women push past us and clock in first. The Foreman at the gate never tells them to stand in the queue. None of us would dare to do that. Why should they be allowed to do it — not once or twice but every day

I've been in Imperials for three years now. I know what I'm talking about. I have three children and I'm alone. My basic pay is £18 but the men get £25. There's a lot of difference between £18 and £25, isn't there? It shouldn't be like that — we do the same work after all. Why shouldn't we get the same money? And as I was telling you, in our section sometimes we get even less than the basic rate if we don't reach the target. I feel very strongly about this — how can I bring up three children on that salary? I had never worked before when I joined Imperials and at that time I was very relieved to get the job. I didn't really know what to expect. But now everyone says Imperials pays lower wages than other factories. If we

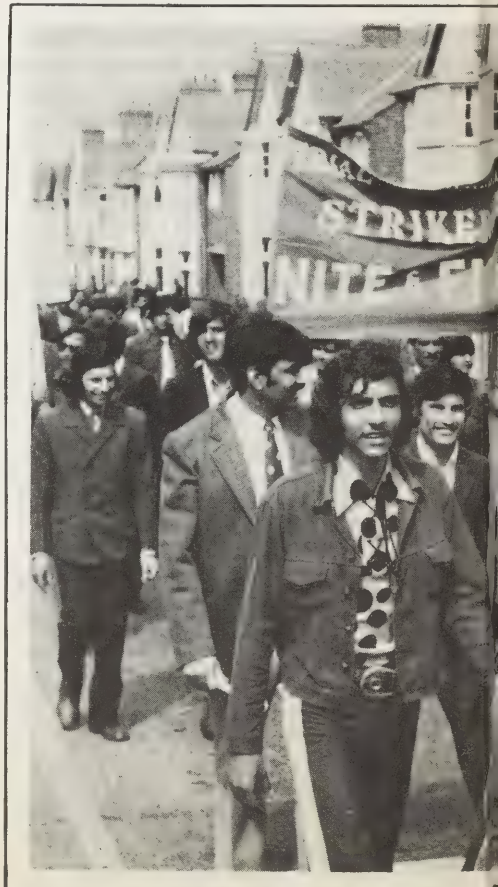
don't get more money and if we don't get equal pay, I'm not going back into that factory. I'll look for another job. I know it won't be easy but I'll look.

Another female worker, recruited this time by the introduction system, outlines her working day from 6 am to 9 pm. As a woman in a Southall factory says: 'Equal pay? We do twice as much work, we should get double pay.'

In February 1968 I came to this country with my daughter and my husband. We used to live in Mombasa. We stayed three days in London and my husband found a job there in a bank. But we couldn't find a room to live in because the rents were too high for us. So we came to Leicester where my sister used to live. My husband started looking for a job and the first job he found was at Imperials. It was assembly line work — making some kind of screws to fit on tripods. Now he's working as a repairman, but they don't give him a repairman's wages. For this reason he came out on strike.

I had never worked before. I was a housewife in Mombasa. I have four children now, but when I first came I had two. I brought one with me and left my son in India with my mother. Later my husband went to India and brought him here.

I started working in February 1970. Imperials used to put up a notice on the notice board's saying that if any of the workers had wives who wanted to work there, they could work from 6 to 10 — after the day shift. My husband heard about it and came and told me. Since he was at home in the evenings I took the job. It was piecework and I earned £6.50 a week. Four hours a day for five days — that made 20 hours. That's how I started. I still do part time work. I worked full time for one year but the work was too hard. So now I work only part-time - 9 to 3. But the work, even part time, is very hard. I get very tired. I have to do rivetting. We have to use a machine to join two parts together with a screw. We also have welding in our section but I don't do that. It's

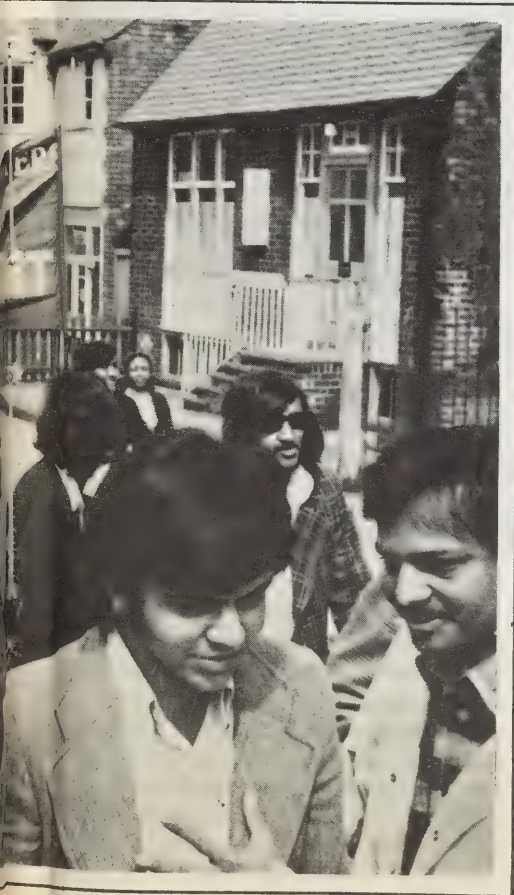


On Sunday May 19, they called a massive demonstration.

piece work and our section is the machine shop. About thirty women work in our shop — mostly Asian, but also some whites and West Indians. None of us have ever got a promotion but the white women get the better jobs. I heard from someone that in our section they pay different rates. They don't have a fixed rate for everybody — but I don't know what other people get. I only know what I get. No one tells us anything and I never bothered to ask anyone before. But now we know that this is happening.

Ever since I've been there I've seen that the whites give their women just one machine to work on while they give us 10 or 11 different machines in a day. You see their job is better. They have just one machine but we have to move around like gypsies. The West Indian women are treated just like us. Another thing is that the setters (we have all white setters) set the white women's machines first and take more trouble over them. Ours they do last and they don't even do them properly. So we have to work slower and then, with piece work, we earn less money. Before our machines are set we have to wait. So we asked for waiting time but they wouldn't give that to us. White women also get jobs of their choice — they can choose their jobs. But we have to do what the setter gives us to do. The West Indian women work like us but they go with the white women. Not a single West Indian in our section came out with us on strike. I don't know how they are in other sections. Even some of our own women — Asian women — who didn't support our strike have this same attitude. They don't want to take our side.

I have to be at work at 9 and before that — at 10 to 9 — I take my son to school. I have to wake up at 6 o'clock every morning. I get all my children dressed and give them breakfast. Then I make my husband some tea. By then it's nearly eight o'clock. Then my husband goes to work. He has to be there at 8. After that sometimes I have to help my children with their homework — reading, spelling, things like that. Then at about 8.30 my 8-year-old son and 9-year-old daughter leave together for school.



stration, 2,000 people came.

They go on their own. Then I have to put my two other children — one is 5½ and the other is 4 — in the nursery. After that I rush straight to work.

I work till 3 and my husband works till 5. At 3 I go straight from the factory to get my two children from the nursery. And soon after I got home my other two children also came back from school. That's about 4 o'clock. I give them some milk and a wash and then start cooking because my husband eats everyday at 6. So by 6 I must have the food ready. I like to put my children to bed early. So after cooking I give them something to eat. I like them to go to bed by 6.30, but sometimes it gets a little later. After that there are always clothes to wash and also the dishes. I like to finish all the work just before I sit down. We usually listen to the news at 9 o'clock on the radio before going to sleep.

After the strike I don't know. Perhaps I will have to look for another job. If they try and change my job there — give me a worse job — I'm going to leave.

As we go to press, management has sent out notices sacking the majority of the striking workers. On the picket line, nine people were arrested in scuffles with the police, and the next day, more than 200 of the workers came to London on a mass lobby of Transport House to try and get the strike made official. Jack Jones and Moss Evans at head office promised an enquiry, but the strikers are still effectively on their own.

The strike at Imperial Typewriters has, apart from anything else, put paid to certain myths. It has also confirmed that sections of British industry depend almost exclusively on cheap black labour and generally on new waves of immigrant wage labourers. It has shown that these wage labourers are not, as many predicted, a class of potential businessmen with petit-bourgeois aspirations. More than this, their actions indicate certain consequences. Over the company hangs the threat of labourlessness. The strikers predict that either Imperials must give way or collapse. It is the same choice that faces London Transport and the service industries, both run, by and large, on black labour.

The East Africa Asians, coming as they do from an urban background and with a long tradition of migrant consciousness, are today on the assembly lines of Leicester united as ever before. Their historical background, coupled with the very nature of their productive function, has resulted in one of the most explosive and significant strikes of recent years. They have put themselves on the front line of the class struggle being waged against capital by black workers up and down this country.

We have seen how Imperial Typewriters factory at Leicester is merely one facility in a multi-national corporation whose business is composed of moving its production around the globe to obtain the most profitable combination of cheap labour and access to markets. We have seen how the prevailing rate of pay for men is £14 below the national

average, while that for women is £6 below. We have also examined how the works consistently turned to new and cheaper sources of labour — from white male workers to Asians from the sub continent, to Asians from East Africa to women, and so on. We have also seen how the union has collaborated in this international scheme of things: the lieutenants of capital, more concerned with people 'learning how things are done in a civilised society' than mobilising sections of the class for political change.

The move away from trade union directives must be seen not only as a practical disadvantage for the strikers but also as a source of political strength. Their new forms of organisation seem to ensure a control of the action by the rank and file. The grievance meetings of the entire strike force became the organisational focus. And the Committee's demands are forced to come from there.

The power of the women comes not only from their being half of the strike force but from their position as mothers and housewives in the community. Not only do they see capital giving them a low wage, they see it raked back to inflation and can connect it to the livelihood of the community — food, clothing and shelter. In the past Asian women have largely come out in support of the demands of their men. They had no choice. The alternative was scabbing. This strike is unique in that the women have had the collective power to make their demand for equal pay a priority. They are the latest section of the working class to fall into factory production. Virtually a second generation of Asians in factory employment in this country, they are aware of the score and less willing to take the horrors. Their militancy on the picket lines, their forcefulness at the grievance meetings and their determination to fight till the end are all proof of this.

Just 300 Asian strikers free of the stranglehold of trade union bureaucracy and relatively new to the production line are fast jumping the hurdles that stand in their way — the division between male and female workers, respect for a union executive's position, fear of the police and law courts and compliance with bureaucratic rules. The struggle for higher wages and better working conditions has brought them into direct confrontation with all these institutions and shown their willingness to take them on. Their discontent with their new productive role and with these institutions are ripe with a new energy confronting international capital. That is not to say that their strength has been tried and tested, but the events of the strike prove that they can and will be.

MOVEMENT IN DOMINICA

Dominica is in turmoil as the Caribbean revolution to remake these societies continues. Dominica has in fact been smouldering for some time. Occasional eruptions of protest and revolt have signalled the determination of the people there to take control. The most important instances in recent times have been the action in the Civil Service to resist obvious attempts at further repression and restriction of expression by the Le Blanc Government.

People have been moving for change not only in the civil service - but in the agricultural sector as well. In 1972 a group of workers practically seized an estate owned by the Colonial Development Corporation in Castle Bruce on the east coast of the Island. They protested moves by the management to cut back the number of employees, and vowed to run the estate themselves through a co-operative. They have almost completed arrangements for the commencement of work.

Recent reports coming out of Dominica clearly indicate that much more is brewing. Violence aimed at white expatriates during the recent carnival startled the Government. And lootings and burnings in Grand-bay and Roseau by unidentified groups have also been reported.

What is the situation behind this action? One of the more organised groups that has been working for change is Movement For A New Dominica. Julian Johnson, a leading member of the movement talked recently about the history and objectives of the movement and the situation in Dominica generally.

Q: What are the origins of Movement for a new Dominica?

JOHNSON: Following 1969 there was an obvious emergence of Black Power movements throughout the Caribbean, and Dominica had a movement articulating the same sort of ideas and calling for the same sort of changes as all of these other movements - for example - cultural decolonisation, greater participation in the economy and so on. Dominica had a funny experience with Black Power. It was interpreted by some people as being purely anti-white as must have happened in all the Islands. There was the effect of the reaction of the international and local press which played up violence as an aspect of Black Power.

So that in 1972 a big conference was held in the village of Coulibistrie, a conference of all the progressive groups in the country comprising Student Councils, and groups from various villages like Grand Bay, Marigot, Castle Bruce, and Portsmouth. And we sat down and had a

whole day discussion and we examined the history of Black Power in the Dominican context. It was thought that it would be a useful thing to move completely away from the term 'Black Power Movement'.

A number of papers were presented at that conference. Some of the papers were on issues like:

The Land Question and Dominica's development.

Tourism and Dominica's development.

The Police and the people.

The Castle Bruce struggle.

The Movement and Religion.

What we found was that many difficulties emerged during this conference - ideological and organisational.

Q: And what kind of programme did the Movement come up with?

JOHNSON: We have been able to arrive at a common set of aims and objectives. We have been able to arrive at common positions on the question of land ownership. And on the question of commerce and politics as well. On the question of land ownership, Dominica has a highly skewed land distribution pattern. There is a total acreage of 76,165 under farms. 40,767 acres of that (53 or 52%) is in estates of 100 acres and above. This is owned by 97 persons. If you take the estates that are 50 acres and above the total acreage is 45,817 and this represents 60% and is owned by 175 persons.

The point being made that the remainder of land is owned by something like 7,000 persons, so we have a very highly skewed land distribution system. The fact is that acreages of 50 and above are all valley lands. Plateau lands and with the best alluvial soils, with access to communications, it is this acreage that is owned by a small percentage of people.

A lot of land has been alienated since the Government passed a so-called Alien Land Holders Act. We are saying that there is not optimum use of the land, a lot of it is under coconuts, which is not always the best use of the land. Much of it is uncultivated and yet you find peasants have to go past the good lands to scrape a living from the hill sides. This is the relationship existing between the peasant and the big estates. And we are saying that this kind of land situation and land use cannot continue. The Movement is saying that any serious Government has got to face the question as to the use of our lands, and that a confrontation will have to come between the Movement and the merchants. Because land owners have been merchants, traditionally.

Secondly, there is a lot of exploitation taking place. There is no price control. The Movement is saying that in a small country of 90,000 Government must have a more positive role in the importing and distribution sector. This may not bring the price of items down but it will serve to stabilise the situation; but the Government which has a large mandate has been afraid to do this.

The country is suffering from severe unemployment. A conservative estimate would put the figure at 15%. But what we have is a lot of disguised unemployment, so that I would say a realistic figure would be about 20%. A lot of them are young persons who have left school; no effort is being made to look at job creation in a serious way.

To date the nationalism of the Government has been a cultural nationalism involving things like the revival of folklore and emphasis on our patois, traditional patterns of dress and so on. But there is no question of getting people involved. There are too many serious inequalities prevailing in the country. The Government since it took power has had a series of tremendous mandates for destroying these inequalities. The Baron Government was in fact seen as the Government of the merchant class, so Le Blanc and the Dominica Labour Party got a mandate from the dispossessed. In 1960 when the Le Blanc Government took over, and given the fact that they had a trade union base and an essentially lower class following, there was a fantastic opportunity to confront the land owning and merchant class. But there has been an embourgeoisification of the Government. There is now an alliance with Astaphans, who have always looked down on black people. A new interest group has emerged in the country, seriously reducing the possibilities open to the ruling party. With the high rate of unemployment there is a lot of patronage and corruption in the country. It is a situation where you have 'politics of scarcity' being practised.

Q: What has been the reception of the ideas of the Movement in Dominica?

JOHNSON: Dominica is essentially a conservative society in terms of the level of consciousness of the people. Among older people you find an attitude of satisfaction with lot and the influence of the Roman Catholic Church here has played no small a part in helping to perpetuate this. But we can see the youth on the street corners responding to the kind of discussion we are carrying on. The negative response comes from those who have given up any hope of seeing any

change. Many of these suffer from the failure of the black power movement. Some people came down fresh with the North American rhetoric thinking they could make an impact, but there was no consciousness in Dominica that could have been heightened.

The Movement has taken a more systematic serious approach. We have moved away from rhetoric, we are promoting study and analysis. We have had, for example, research on the activity on banks in this country. We have information, for example, that last year the local banks gave \$25m in loans. Out of that \$9m went to the distributive trades, about \$3m in agriculture. Nothing is recorded under the heading 'Land Development', including housing and so on. Personal advances amount to \$3.8m and you can guess that this would be made up of loans to people to purchase motor cars and that sort of thing. Tourism got \$2.3m and transport \$1m. So the point that we have been making is that major funding does not go to development. One of our key resources is our land. And funding does not go to agriculture and we have a Government which has had a mandate for 13 years. If they were serious, they could have mobilised the country on issues like these.

Q: What are the immediate aims of

Movement for a New Dominica?

JOHNSON: Well presently we are not thinking about any short-term development into a political party or anything like that. We are just not interested in the formation of a political party. Unless it begins to do a serious job of consciousness building it will simply be another reformist political party. A lot of ground work needs to be done.

Q: How does MND go about its programme of consciousness building?

JOHNSON: Well, we have *Twavay*, our week journal. *Twavay* is an educational medium. But we also have internal educational programmes. We meet fortnightly on Mondays. We are not too active on the external front. We have held ten meetings with other groups in the country. We've had an unemployment survey and a housing survey of Mahaut. But we are mainly concerned right now with concrete information gathering. We are giving greater priority to internal education, and we consider that more important than the platform meetings of the Bobby Clarke type.

We have a centre, the MND House at Goodwill. We have a Library, a machine for rolling off *Twavay*, and are now negotiating for acquiring a press and a van for the Movement. We get tangible

support from MND followers in North America, and enjoy pretty good information exchange with progressive groups in the region and in North America.

Q: What is the size of the membership?

JOHNSON: The Roseau membership is twenty-five. We have groups of affiliates in Portsmouth, Marigot, Grand Bay and a few other villages. The paper is distributed in ten of the most populous villages.

Q: What has Government reaction been so far to the Movement?

JOHNSON: Well, we have been called communist, accused of preaching violence and the same sort of nonsense which the regimes in the region usually accuse progressive movements of. There was a whole debate on us in 1973 — on the 12 and 18 July 1973, to be exact. It was a full scale debate on the Movement led by the Premier and supported by the Deputy Premier. I was banned from entering the House of Assembly. There have been attempts at victimisation. One of our brothers, Desmond Trotter, was arrested and charged with possession of ammunition. Police claim to have found a detonator in his home and there have been other subtle attempts at victimisation.

Taken from MANJAK, Barbados.

Films



White Man's Country / Mau Mau.

Directed by Anthony Howarth and David Koff. Distributed by Knight Films, 1, Lower James Street, London W.1.

I am not suggesting anything so crude as a conspiracy or anything like that, but what little I used to know about Kenya and the struggle for liberation filled me with terror. The very words Mau Mau were enough to strike ice into my soul, filled as the papers of the time were with such rubbish about terrorism, secret societies and dreadful murder and

mutilation of innocent white farmers and settlers.

These two films, released as a double bill by the Other Cinema, go a long way towards nailing the mythology. 'White Man's Country' tells the history of white imperialism from the late nineteenth century through to Independence. It details the thousands massacred at the turn of the century in the strategy of eliminating African opposition to the invaders, the wholesale slaughter of goats and cattle, the arrogance with which the settlers simply moved into the 'White Highlands' and took the fertile lands for their own. The inhabitants were forced into labour camps and thus into the colonial economy as landless labourers. With the importation of Asian labour, the East African railway was built ("The Africans were very friendly, and they learned from us they'd never worked before, of course," one blue-rinsed woman tells us), and Teddy Roosevelt described it as the most attractive playground in the world.

'Mau Mau' is a complementary film, which takes up the impatience of the African people after their fight in the Second World War and details how it grew through the Kikuyu Association and the Freedom Struggles Association to the Land Freedom Army. Mau Mau, we learn, never existed at all except as a figment of the white settlers' imagination which turned into a very useful propaganda shorthand. The attempts of the settlers to defend their outpost of capital against the rising tides of nationalism, the political coming and going be-

tween them and capital's arm in Whitehall, and the drafting in of troops, well illustrated by the use of jingoistic newsreels of the time, is all carefully explained.

The explanation of the role of the settlers is particularly useful at present for understanding a similar reaction in Mozambique now: in the metropolitan country the highest elements of capital, sensing the way the political wind is blowing and already charting out a policy of neo-colonialism, move faster than the settlers on the ground. While Whitehall was ready to deal with its selected leaders in preparation for the next phase, the settlers declared their own State of Emergency and an early version of UDI. While the settlers saw the rebellion as a simple matter of oath-taking and tribalism, Whitehall knew politics when it saw it.

There are minor criticisms of course. We don't hear enough about the East African Asians and their role, we are given few interviews with political militants of the time, the film doesn't tie the struggle in Kenya into the whole African continent in a total enough way and we need more information on the political movement now. But these are small criticisms compared with the films' great worth as educational material on a period and location of British imperial history. It leaves Lord Chalfont's recent sketchy biography of Jomo Kenyatta on BBC1 standing, and surpasses much current material which is too propagandistic. It left me wanting to know a lot more.

Larry O'Brien

BACKLASH

BACKLASH invites our readers to participate in discussion on the feature article of each issue. The contributions below are in response to June's 'The Black Prisoner' and May's 'The Caribbean Revolution De-Mystified'. Next month's BACKLASH will be 'The Strike at Imperial Typewriters' and the struggle of Asian workers.

Sir,

On reading Ron Phillip's article on 'The Black Prisoner', and as an ex-prisoner myself who has shared the same humiliating and frustrating experiences as the author, I express my thanks to Ron Phillips for highlighting with such clarity the trials and the struggles of the prisoner — note — don't just say black prisoner. You see, when the white and black are oppressed and humiliated and demoralised, quite openly every day, when they are constantly told by actions against them that they are no longer individuals, but just names and numbers, and are treated like animals rather than as men — then solidarity between white and black increases. The prisoner's circumstances leaves him very little time to harbour hate or dislike for his fellow prisoner or brother because of colour of skin or a different culture.

There is one common enemy, the screw, the custodian of the Home Office, authority. One can't be a nigger one day and be asked to demonstrate because a fellow prisoner has been beaten by the screws the next. If a black or a white prisoner in long-term prisons is beaten by the screws (incidentally, beatings entail being kicked, punched and beaten with truncheons), a large number of both black and white prisoners protest, the same applies with any prisoner, white or yellow.

You see, outside prison walls racism is common, sometimes in subtle forms, other times brutally stark, and a lot of it is to do with fear. A lot of things you don't know or understand you fear. So the white older man who hasn't been to schools with any blacks, he doesn't know blacks. He has never been in a tight corner with a guy with a black skin. But in prison it could well be the black guy who runs to his aid or who lives in the next cell. Of course prejudice is open between screw and black prisoners and with the

black prisoners he has a ready made insult that he knows will really hit home.

The stigma of having been in prison when one leaves its walls and is back in society again is rapidly disappearing. So many policemen have been exposed and tried for corruption and for perverting the course of justice, and people that members of the public know personally who have been inside. I believe that going inside is a hazard that the working-class society faces from one week to the next. Youths planted with drugs, black adults ditto, the rest breathalysers, and all sorts of other crimes that they could well become victims of. In fact the train robbers have taken on a hero image to much of the population.

On the whole, inside prison is the world in microscopic form, hence when humiliated and insulted even the non-violent prisoner can hit back with words. For his defiance he is punished with the loss of remission and often solitary confinement — that's bad enough, but with the beatings that are prevalent in British prisons, this often stops the prisoner from hitting back. He has to choose between subjecting himself to all sorts of shit and bullying, which makes him so ashamed of himself that he no longer functions as a person but becomes some institutionalised hobbling puppet, or of standing up for his rights and self respect at the price of doing years or months longer than the sentences inflicted upon him. A rebel outside to my mind should be a rebel inside. Unless one is a totally innocent victim, each man who enters prison was rebelling against the system in his own way, so why cease even though the odds are against you.

I feel that English blacks are being imprisoned in more increasing numbers every year. They aren't on the defensive; they were brought up in this country but feel alien, and they feel, quite rightly, that

they should have a share in the wealth that a small part of the population amasses. They are angry young men and the system is just another challenge to them. Hence solidarity between black and white prisoners will increase. In prison the man is unmasked — you see him every day, in every situation, when he's up, when he's down — and in prison it's what sort of person you are that counts.

Ron Phillips, I'm not against your article. I think it was very well written. I hope I'm just adding to it.

Mark Owens

Sir,

Ron Phillips' article on blacks in prison made me think back to the short period I spent in Brixton. Perhaps one or two notes on that might fill out Ron's own account.

As a white prisoner my situation with regard to racism was of course quite different from Ron's. Still, the stripping and bathing session was, as he relates, terribly humiliating.

They seemed to want to keep you naked as long as possible. Their uniform, to which you have been trained to give respect, now takes on a more threatening aspect given your own proneness.

Bathing was carried out by other prisoners: you were not allowed to bathe yourself. Once again you were passive, mute, a physical invitation for abuse; you can choose your role: object, cripple or child.

After bathing we all stood around half-dry and half-dripping. Then we were ordered to dress. At this point the prisoner (even looking back, you see, we use society's term for our fellow-oppressed!) next to me fell to the ground moaning. It was immediately obvious that he was undergoing an epileptic fit. For the warders, however, the matter was simple: 'The black bastard isn't getting dressed.' So they proceeded to beat him up.

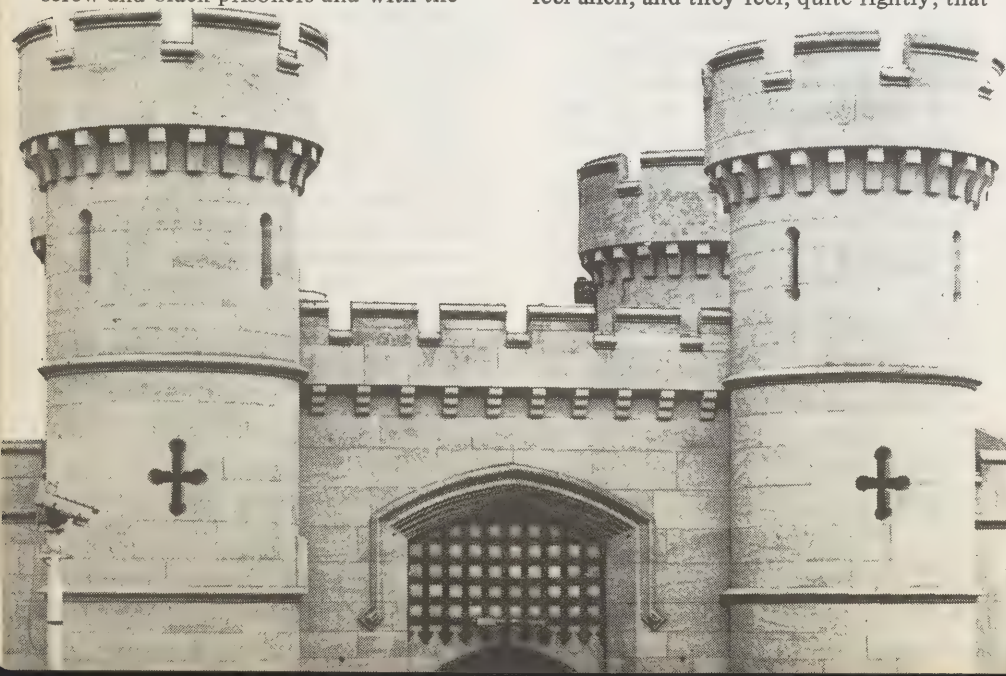
I just stood there. The final humiliation: not doing anything about brutality and racism; becoming one of them in my passivity.

Outside the cells there were different coloured cards for prisoners' different religions. I had given my religion (this was some time ago) as Jewish and thus had a blue card.

I had only been in my cell for about half an hour when a warder arrived. 'Which one of you's Hornung?' 'Me.' 'You're the fucking jew-boy, aren't you?' 'Yes.' 'Right. You're going to get it!' And I did.

The situation of blacks, whose very appearance alerts the warders' sense of victimisation, is obviously very much worse than mine. Still, perhaps these notes can be mentally added to Ron's by those who read his article.

Andrew Hornung



Sir,

Neither shall we deal with the contempt bestowed upon us by 'international revolutionaries', both black and white, who come with their metropolitan mentality to dictate to us what we must do and how in our backyards. The present Caribbean generation has broken with that tradition altogether and demands due recognition from all and sundry, despite the smallness and seeming unimportance of the islands, despite what Vidia Naipaul may think or write in his failure to understand what produced him.

The above quotation from Bukkha Rennie's article represents something quite new in Caribbean politics and takes the spirit of the Cuban revolution that much further. The working class movement in the Caribbean, particularly after the Second World War, sought 'the advice' of the British TUC, thereby digging its own grave. The nationalist movement of the same period pinned its hopes on the support of the Labour Party in Britain who ensured its continued dependence on capitalist development. Almost coincidentally, Vidia Naipaul, only weeks ago, made reference in the *Sunday Times* to the Trinidadian revolutionary struggle as a 'disease' which 'infected the Indian Community'. Bukkha Rennie's attack on the above tendencies, however overstressed, is quite justified, more so because he not only states that there is a break with the old tradition but also places the 'revolutionary working class at the centre of the development of Caribbean society', (THE WORKING CLASS IS REVOLUTIONARY OR IT IS NOTHING) and capital as always reacting to working class struggles, hence the naked brutality of capitalist rule in the Caribbean.

Anyone with the faintest knowledge of Caribbean history must be aware that the view of the mass of West Indians as election fodder, backward people to be led, has undermined every progressive movement in our history. This tendency still persists in Trinidad & Tobago and it seems clear that Rennie, a political activist, is involved in fighting them tooth and nail. We here in Britain have a duty to support him. Secondly, on the question of identity, Rennie says: 'This self activity in the struggle for the specific ideals mentioned created the Caribbean people, created the Caribbean nation. That is our identity, there is no other kind of identity.' In one sentence he manages to clear up the confusion created by middle class Caribbean intellectuals (the culture vultures that they are) on who and what are Caribbean peoples. Several PhDs have been attained and scholars celebrated for writings on the subject, at the end of which we are no wiser. Rennie places the process that forms and shapes a social identity where it belongs — in the heart of the struggle itself.

Thirdly, there is a marked absence in the 'Backlash' columns on what I think is the most important issue raised in the article — '... the connection between the nature and process of labour and political power or control

of the islands as being clear in our minds, as characteristic of Caribbean political development. It is a statement that rings true, for George Woodcock of the British TUC warned Guyanese in the 1950s that it was dangerous to twin trade unionism and politics. Woodcock's task, it appears then, was to break this link, to secure the rise of the middle classes and the entrenchment of capitalist exploitation.

It seems therefore that the potential of the Caribbean revolution to effect the most thorough going changes in every area of social activity flows from the above premise.

Bukkha Rennie has omitted to mention several areas of the Caribbean struggle as reflected in Trinidad. It would be a miracle if he didn't — in fact, it would take a book to include everything. However, the insights we have from his article are quite profound in many instances and lay a serious foundation for further exchange of information and analysis between Caribbean revolutionaries at home and the immigrant workers' movement in the metropolis.

Stephen Nicholson

Sir,

I'm not a regular reader of *Race Today* and bought your May issue full of expectation. I got a real disappointment over Bukkha Rennie's article. I was hoping for a clear account of Trinidad's troubles in 1970 — you don't see much written about it anywhere.

Let me say straight away that the article did contain a lot of the relevant facts, but then I will quickly go on to say that the presentation did precious little to demystify. The factual account was selective to the point of unbalance, points were juxtaposed often as though

deliberately paired to confuse and finally were made subservient to a flood of ideological rhetoric.

Maybe I'm just extra stupid but I wouldn't be surprised if there were very few Trinidadians who would make sense of Bukkha Rennie's analysis. In fact I wonder whether there's much identification at all in this so called 'mass' revolution. To most Trinidadians it may have appeared to have been an uprising in the regiment coupled with some minority political activation on the university campus and, to a lesser extent, in the trade union movement.

I'm not saying that it didn't hold the interest of the people. But then it was the scandal of scandals and more than this no one can treat a military uprising lightly. If it showed one thing it showed just how potentially powerful a small group of armed men could be. It was this that sunk home to the populace as much as the grievances that had prompted the uprising. Interest is one thing but identification is another. Let's not confuse the deep impression that this revolution made with assumptions of popular support.

I'm not competent to detail an alternative analysis, indeed I had approached the article seeking help. Rennie concluded: 'And the Caribbean Revolution remains a mystery to all who fail to understand' — that seems self-evident. What's not evident is an understanding of this so called Caribbean Revolution. I suspect that failure to understand isn't all my fault. At least if we dispensed with the clouds of ideology it would be easier to see, maybe even understand.

Nigel Hughes



African Encyclopedia

Each African country has its own article in this single-volume encyclopedia, with sections on history, geography, and economy, and a map. There are separate sections on African peoples, languages, historic empires, and on contemporary writers, artists, and leading political figures. Economic development, industry and agriculture, society, religion, and mythology, are treated from an African viewpoint; also science and technology, international organizations, space explorations, and astronomy. Illustrated £4 paper covers £1.50

Black Slaves in Britain

F.O. Shyllon

By a careful reconstruction of legal cases and an examination of the attitudes and personalities of many of the figures involved, the author demonstrates how acceptable slavery in Britain was, near the turn of the eighteenth century. He shows that it was economic considerations rather than moral righteousness that led ultimately to the abolition of slavery. £4.50 *Institute of Race Relations*

A New System of Slavery

The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920

Hugh Tinker

This 'excellent and scholarly piece of work' (*The Guardian*) is the first comprehensive survey of the export of Indians to supply the labour needed in producing plantation crops such as sugar, coffee, tea, and rubber, in Mauritius, South Africa, the Caribbean, Guyana, and Fiji. Although this followed the legal ending of slavery, Professor Tinker shows how many features there were in common. Illustrated £5.75 *Institute of Race Relations*

Sikh Children in Britain

A.G. James

A.G. James examines the extent to which the social traditions of Punjabi villages are being maintained in Sikh households here, through discussions of family life, the upbringing of children, religious observance, and adolescence. He argues that the children are developing an awareness of their own special identity that may create tension and unhappiness, but may also lead to a unique and valuable contribution to British culture and society. Paper covers £1.30 *Institute of Race Relations*

Race

John R. Baker

'Dr Baker surveys the subject in a logical, comprehensive manner. He has obviously spent an immense amount of time and effort over collecting material from many diverse sources, and he writes with clarity and sincerity . . . Dr Baker has done a very thorough job in assembling so much diverse information, which has never been brought together before' — *The T.L.S.* £6.50

Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-1945

A Study in Ideology and Social Classes

J. Ayodele Langley

Here is the first detailed study of the origins of Pan-African politics in West Africa and also of Nationalist ideology and social classes there during the inter-war period. The author has used a good deal of previously unpublished material to describe the personalities, movements, and ideas that formed the Pan-African movement. £6.50

Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya

A Study of Minorities and Decolonization

Donald Rothchild

The author applies the bargaining model to inter-ethnic relations and conflict resolution among the three main racial communities in Kenya shortly before and after Independence in 1963. £7 *Institute of Race Relations*

Politics in Rhodesia

White Power in an African State

Larry W. Bowman

Larry Bowman's comprehensive analysis of Rhodesian society and politics, from the arrival of Europeans in 1890 to the present, shows that the political crises starting in the 1960s were firmly rooted in choices and patterns of interaction established much earlier. His conclusion is that the white system is solidly entrenched, and that change is unlikely to come about except through violence. £4.75 *Harvard*

REVIEWS

From Sundown to Sunup: The Making of the Black Community

George P. Rawick

Greenwood, Connecticut. £1.50.

The black revolts in the U.S.A. occurring from the early 1960s onwards have posed one of the most powerful revolutionary threats to international capital in modern times. The present crisis within the American State attests to the subversive actuality and potential of these communities formed and shaped in their opposition to American capital.

George Rawick's *Sundown to Sunup* opens the door on the historical origins of these communities. In doing so he places the slave as central to the development of the black community and the active agent in forming and shaping what that community is and has been. More than that — in placing the slave as central, he is posing the opposite to the tendency in American historical thought in which 'the black slave himself has been virtually absent from the written history other than as the victim of white aggression or the recipient of white paternalism'.

Rawick follows the tradition of Du Bois who, writing in 1935, does for the black movement in the civil war what Rawick does for the slave community. Du Bois also fought against the bourgeois tradition in American historical thought. 'The treatment of the period of Reconstruction reflects small credit upon American historians as scientists. We have too often a deliberate attempt so to change the facts of history that the story will make pleasant reading for Americans ... What was slavery in the United States? Just what did it mean to the owner and the owned? Shall we accept the conventional story of the old slave plantation and its owner's fine, aristocratic life of cultured leisure? Or shall we note slave biographies, like those of Charles Ball, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass; the careful observations of Olmsted and the indictment of Hinten Helper?'

Like Du Bois, Rawick makes original use of the interviews given by the slaves themselves. Rawick uses interviews taken in the 1920s and 1930s, and draws from them the totality of the slave experience — from sundown to sunup — in the community and at work. But it has to be said that on the slave plantation the separation of the slave community from the place of work was not as sharp as the separation between the factory and the community today.

This point in no way undermines the totality of Rawick's approach. Exactly the opposite, because it is precisely that total approach to politics that underlines the strength and power of the black revolts in the '60s.

Here the author gives us an indication of what those interviews reveal

... they reveal the day-to-day life of people, their customs, their values, their ideas, hopes,

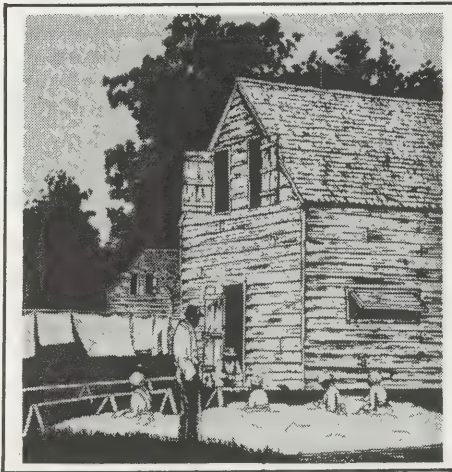
aspirations, and fears. We can derive from them a picture of slave society and social structure and of the interaction between black and white. We can see in them the outlines of the slave community, that network of communication systems whereby people were enabled to live.

The black movement in the U.S.A. faced with the counter revolutionary academic's interpretation of the slave as total victim, has tended to portray the history of slavery as the opposite, a series of heroic exploits of runaway slaves and slave rebellions, and a vacuum between them.

This approach fails to grasp the totality of the slave existence and always runs the risk of making the simplistic division between Uncle Toms and revolutionaries — those who rebelled and those who didn't.

Rawick rejects both interpretations and sets out a series of possibilities open to the slaves. He then adds: 'The slaves could have chosen any of these strategies. In fact they chose all of them and they all were interrelated.' And above and through all these possible approaches was the ever-present, ever self-creating and -renewing strategy of building the slave community.'

The international nature of the slave experience is also comprehensively dealt with. One chapter informs on how the experience in Africa, so too the cross fertilisation of the West Indian and American experiences have enriched and contributed to the slave community in the U.S.A. With the rise of imperialism and the consequent sharpness of the division of labour internationally the black community today has increased quantitatively and qualitatively having drawn into its



ranks blacks from every part of the globe. No history of the black community can now be written without the voices of blacks from the Caribbean, Africa and Puerto Rico playing a central role — Marcus Garvey, Stokely Carmichael, C.L.R. James. The seeds of that world view of history are sown in *Sundown to Sunup*.

Part II of the book almost appears to strangle the effect of Part I. Titled 'The Sociology of European and American Racism', it is an unchallengeable analysis of the development of racism in American society. However it belongs to another

book which will of course tackle the issue in itself. In one sentence Rawick gives a hint of what the second part of the book ought to be devoted to. 'Yet while white people often did not feel the presence of the state black people always did.' To explore the relationship between the black community and the state seems to me to be the logical follow through from Part I.

Reprinted from *Falling Wall Book Review 1*

The book is obtainable from FWP, 79 Richmond Rd, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5EP. 15p postage.

New Writing in India

Ed. by Adil Jussawalla

Penguin, 45p. 1974.

If language is a dress that culture wears, then literature is its Sunday best. It is in a sense what the culture wants to be known as. Adil Jussawalla's anthology of new Indian writing is an attempt at a new self-definition, I believe a conscious one, by the writers of stories, poems, plays, and by the selectivity of the editor himself.

I do not know enough to say whether the sort of writing in this book has never been known, but as an English reader one can firmly say that it has never been known by the class of readers at whom it is aimed. (An anthology published in a Penguin series is inevitably aimed.) Adil's introduction neatly delineates his particular territory. But with the neatness goes an anger. To put it bluntly, Indian writing has been seen as a vehicle of Indian erotica or a completely different vessel of Indian 'spirituality'. To an English reader it has come to mean the Kama Sutra, or various philosophical escapes, be they classics or some new cornball muddledness. To be fairer, Indian writing also means to some the works of Nirad Chaudhuri, R.K. Narayan, perhaps V.S. Naipaul, and to people with library tickets, the novels of R. Prater Jhabvala.

This anthology proclaims the death of such an India if not the non-existence of it. To the writers, chosen from eleven different languages, a new kind of India matters. This is the Indian writing of the last ten years, chosen not with a deference to Western taste, but with a sense of representational honesty. It makes the anthology fascinating and depressing at the same time. It is fascinating because there is a uniformity in the tone of observation and cynicism which runs through it, and depressing because it doesn't express the sort of hope that Indian revolutionary propaganda does.

In editing it, Adil claims that writing in India today owes less to English authors than it does to writers like Voznesensky, Pablo Neruda, Borges and Gunter Grass. We are still counting our debts. Not only in this narrow sense. A very prominent place in the anthology goes to a reprint of an essay by Nissim Ezekiel, the Bombay writer, demolishing V.S. Naipaul's vision of India. For the editor's generation of Indians it can only mean that the

bark and bite of Naipaul's *Area of Darkness*, published ten years ago, have left their mark. I wonder who else cares.

In spite of the editor's note that the writing in the Indian languages shows an unevenness, the translations make the flair of the writing seem extremely uniform. The stories, the poems, and the extracts from plays, display a metropolitan consciousness, sophisticated in its own way and angry and knowing, no longer bewildered. Almost throughout, the anthology sings the city. Writing about the anthology, really becomes writing about the conception of it. For the stories and poems themselves, the reader must go to the book and find an India violent and self-consciously explosive.

Farrukh Dhondy

Business as Usual - International Banking in South Africa

CIS Anti-Report commissioned by The World Council of Churches
30p.

Those of us who are not South African or 'experts' on South Africa come intimidated to its questions. How can we take political, as opposed to moral, sides when we have not ourselves tasted the brutality of that regime or, failing that, have not memorised the list of companies or banks who invest there, don't know exactly what military equipment that State buys from other States — British, French, Italian . . . ?

The left/liberal Establishment trade on this intimidation, have created it. They feed us 'facts' and thrive on the guilt they promote. They are true, these 'facts', but dismembered from any struggle, they hide a greater truth. And if the black South African victim cannot help himself or herself, we are clearly guilty if we are not galvanised into action on this poor victim's behalf.

In fact this moral trip succeeds in making particularity look like exception. The rule of capital in South Africa is exceptionally brutal, but it is the rule of capital. *Business as Usual: International Banking in South Africa* shows just how international that capital is. The list of banks which invest directly there in business or in projects such as Cabora Bassa, or indirectly in other projects and enterprises, is a Who's Who of international finance. Just like investment almost anywhere else in the world. Not exceptional. Not provincial. Business as usual by any means possible.

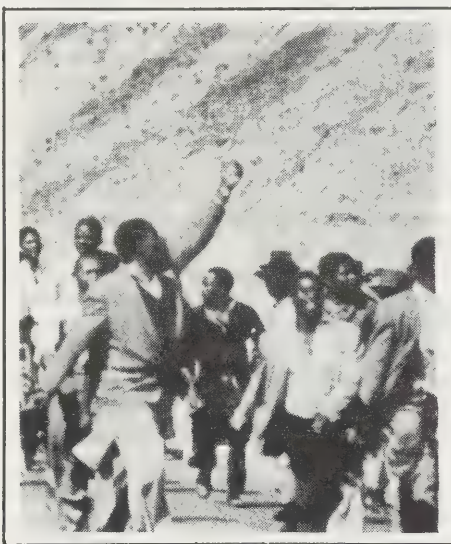
Capital invests where a substantial profit looks likely. It is as absurd to call for British capital to pull out of South Africa as to call for it to pull out of the UK. It runs like hell, if it can, only when it smells working class 'instability'. Here is proof very close to home — at home, in fact. After the strike of Protestants in Northern Ireland, the following appeared on the front page of the *Financial Times*:

In industrial promotion circles it is being gloomily predicted that the strike will halt foreign investment for 12 months. It is felt many potential investors will be afraid that the

Loyalists, having discovered the potency of the strike as a political weapon, will be tempted to use it again if other demands are not met (3 June 1974).

But when a wave of struggle swept South Africa, the State had to move to protect investment and ensure against the flight of capital. One measure was to bring in the TUC to help rationalise and stabilise Black rebellion.

Now we are on more familiar territory. Apartheid is not an exotic historical accident but Western capital with particular methods of extracting profits. The pass laws and Bantustans are the way international capital distributes Black workers in the South African economy. For example, no one would sell himself on the mining or agriculture labour market if he could get into the cities or subsist on his own land instead. The pass laws aim to regulate Blacks entering cities; the land in the Bantustans can barely support anyone.



Strikers march on Capetown

The ways in which non-industrial people in Southern Africa are thrown onto the wage labour market reads like the history of sixteenth century Britain. Contract labour, immigrant labour, seasonal labour, none of these has been copyrighted in South Africa. What makes them unique is the unique balance of power between South African labour and the State, not that it is forced labour. All labour ruled by the wage is forced. To believe that forced labour is limited to Southern Africa is to ignore it in, say, Northern Europe. This is a neglected aspect of the South Africa connection.

Here is another. The Pilkington strikers were undermined by imported South African glass. What struggles has our labour been used to undermine in the recent explosions of strikes there? We don't know. Nobody tells us. Reports on international banking are not made about Britain — at least, not made for us to read. We lack information about our own situation, and, despite much that is written, about South Africa too. I once tried to find out who, white and Black, did what work in the auto factories in South Africa. Nobody seemed to know.

Comparative wage figures are better known. But the left/liberal Establishment

claims that if we give these figures to the trade unions we are informing 'the workers'. Even when the TUC went to South Africa for the clear purpose of cooling an explosive and rebellious situation for capital, Ruth First and no doubt others found that there were 'some ambiguities' (*Race Today*, April 1974) in its report. It had given correct information on the control of African labour and she surmised a proletarian influence. A very shaky supposition. There is a great deal more serious information about workers' struggles — including those in South Africa — in the *Financial Times* than in the *Morning Star*, for example. But then the *Financial Times* is not written for workers, any more than the TUC reports are.

Ultimately your politics are dependent on how you see (or if you see) the working class where you are. It was not new to see the TUC doing a mediation job for the governors, it was just a new place. For the TUC is no more an exception as mediator and as racist mediator than South Africa is an exception because it is racist. And they are both racist for the same reason: *racism is productive of a higher rate of profit which they both strive to achieve*. As much as we cannot understand South Africa except in the context of the movements of capital and of the working class internationally, we cannot understand the TUC except in the context of the same movements. Now that Labour is back, we can expect to be asked again to pressure a Labour Government on South African sanctions of one kind or another. Such useless and exhausting and unproductive activity seems to stem from hope. On the contrary; its roots are cynicism and defeat of the deepest order. To have confidence, in TUCs or Labour Parties anywhere is to accept the defeat of, and have the deepest contempt for, those they exist to control — the working class.

Finally, the heart of the matter, wages. The pamphlet, *Business as Usual*, speaks of 'a narrow view of apartheid, as a question of wage rates alone'. It hoped perhaps by dealing with wages this way to avoid reducing the human being to physical wants. But it is the *wage relation* which reduces us. Your dependence on the wage binds you to capital, which rules you through the wage, in the Bantustan through lack of a wage, in the mines and especially agriculture with below-subsistence wages. But the wage can become greater buying power and a measure of your power to resist capital's total control of your life. This is not a moral but a political question, a question of power. In a society dominated by wage labour, wages are the very substance of exploitation. The pamphlet shows how that is the core in South Africa, in the next paragraph: 'The economic function of apartheid' is 'to create and maintain the pool of cheap labour of which overseas (and of course domestic) employers then take advantage'. The struggle against apartheid, therefore, is first and foremost *the struggle not to be cheap labour*, for more wages, by any means necessary.

Marie Brent

Passports and Politics

Derek Humphry and Michael Ward
Penguin Special, 35p.

A recently completed survey in the London borough of Ealing reminds us that the 27,000 Ugandan Asians who came to Britain in 1972 did not all merge into a life of luxury. Out of 126 families studied, 67% were living in accommodation without a rent book, 25% were paying more than £6 a room in rent and 10% were facing eviction. This survey confirms similar work carried out in Wandsworth and emphasises the enforced proletarianisation, illustrated by the fact that 84% of those who are employed are working in semi-skilled and service industries. The Ugandan Asians have arrived, and while the prediction that they will form a Trojan Horse into the Asian working class movement may have some justification, it is more likely that Imperial Typewriters points the future path of struggle.

Humphry and Ward have produced the sort of lively and readable account of the Ugandan Asians' arrival in Britain that one would expect from the *Sunday Times*' race relations commentator and the Regional Organizer of the Coordinating Committee. They describe the arrival of the Asians into East Africa, note their role in that society with clarity and a little political depth, and discuss Amin's decision to expel them. The bulk of the book is taken up with describing the way in which the Tory government made the magnanimous decision to admit them, despite the current of racism they had helped to create, and then did little else except appear to be doing a lot. The book is fine on the detail of the Resettlement Camps, the visa harassment and the British political response to their arrival. The cack-handed amalgam of ex-colonials and long-haired volunteers drafted in to deal with reception and location is handled with a wit and closely observed style, while the chapter on Basildon's local election on the possible allocation of all of five council houses to Ugandan Asians is good source material for any study of local politics and racial tension.

The book is suitably merciless with the off-hand way in which people were shunted about from place to place, warned off from 'Red Areas' and given little real help with relocation and employment. Parsimony, a vociferous ultra-right which found in the situation a fertile ground for proselytisation, and a misplaced faith in civil service know-how combined to create the right sort of conditions for industrial employment. Like any refugees, ripe for exploitation and ready to bring their skills to the service of capital, the Ugandan Asians were prepared for any slot in the economy the state was ready to fit them into.

What is interesting is how these people will change to fit the new situation. This book gives us some of the background information we need to observe this process. It is good on a liberal criticism of the government for being too willing to concede to racist pressure and the need to maintain a reasonable face to

the rest of the world. What it naturally lacks is anything more of a political analysis: it gives us some of the facts, but when it tells us what the facts mean, it tells us wrong. Excellent background material it may be, but it is nothing more.

Tony Davis

The New Technology of Repression: Lessons from Northern Ireland

British Society for Social Responsibility in Science
Pamphlet No. 2, 30p.

Alan Lee Williams, Labour MP for Hornchurch, has just issued a new book with his brother examining the question of the urban guerillas and how to deal with them in the '70s. This book joins the growing debate started in public by Kitson and carried on by the likes of John Brown, Clutterbuck and Brigadier Calvert on how the state shall deal with the rising tide of rebellion. Most of the solutions they see carefully interweave a balance of political manoeuvre and technological repression. The political manoeuvres, we can deal with, but we need to learn more about the technological repression.

Thus the BSSRS step timely into the breach with this useful pamphlet detailing some of the advances that have been made in the field. As Vietnam was a testing ground for new weaponry to deal with rural insurgency, so has Ulster become one for sorting out what 'works' and what doesn't in the field of urban control. The BSSRS examine some of this experimentation from CS gas — useful as a form of mass punishment of the population sheltering the rebellious few as well as marginally effective in crowd control — through rubber and plastic bullets — developed originally from the need in another colony to baton charge the Hong Kong population when you don't have enough policemen to get up close — to the range of sophisticated psychological torture like sensory deprivation, the use of white noise and the experiments with ultra-sonic sound.

Some of the techniques detailed in the book are as familiar as the latest TV newsreel, while much of the mental torture has been appropriately shrouded in secrecy and official jargonese: the pamphlet goes some of the way to detail what has actually been going on in the interrogation rooms in Ulster, and from this we must be prepared to learn. But what is needed now is far more detail both of what is happening, and of what is being prepared for later. The group who produced the pamphlet have opened the door for other researchers to dig about and inform the public what is going on. But the pamphlet either devotes too much space to explaining itself politically, or is not long enough to give us the thorough going technical data that is needed. It is soon read and leaves too many unanswered questions.

Nevertheless, it is an important pamphlet to read. Half of the state's armoury is composed of surprise, and in demytho-

logising developments as diverse as the water cannon and the plastic bullet, the pamphlet goes some of the way to preparing us for a later stage. What is really needed now is a much longer, more detailed and more carefully thought out work on the state's whole development of social control, whether through technological breakthroughs, or in the machinery of politics. D.C.

Natives of My Person

George Lamming
Pan Books, London 1974.

Even to attempt a review of this remarkable book in the space allotted is to reduce it. The best we can do, now that it is published in paperback in this country, is to sketch its themes and review its reviewers, and try to show that there is a special connection between the two.

Natives is a novel by a distinguished black West Indian man. In a way conquest is its theme, conquest of blacks by whites and women by men. It illustrates in creative fiction what the women's movement has been at such pains to explain, that the personal is completely political; and what Marx explained even earlier, that the political is completely personal. The unification of public and private person has been Lamming's theme in other novels, particularly in *Of Age and Innocence*. The white male conqueror may have only a public dimension in history books but history books lie; in life it could never have been so. Possession is more than nine-tenths of the law of the white male power structure and when one *must* possess, one *cannot* enter into any relationship which is not founded on possession. So that the personality which could conquer black slaves could also discipline and degrade 'free' white labour and had no choice but to degrade women and the sexual relationship, not only between slave and master but between master and mistress. In fact the description of the imperialist male demonstrates that colonialism and manhood — read machismo — bed down together.

White critics in the US have learnt a great deal about racism from black armed rebellion. *Natives* was highly praised in prestige journals and nominated for awards there. In this country, the reception of *Natives* when it was first published here in hardback in 1972 was astonishingly ignorant. What critics couldn't stomach was that Lamming took upon himself to write not about blacks but about whites.

The slave in the first awakening must concentrate on herself, must ening must concentrate on herself, must search out not who she is (for only freedom can begin to tell her that), but who she is not. She must take a trip into herself and, though it is painful, distinguish the master's voice within her head from her own which that alien voice would drown. But as she gathers power, she is able to do more. She can see the master for what *he* is and describe him in a way he can never see himself. For the master can only define the slave as 'slave' by ignorance of the person behind the label.

He can only define himself as 'master' by the same ignorance, the ignorance which makes his power appear native to his person. It is only the slave who finds out, who *must* find out, as part of her struggle to overthrow her slavery, who is who and what is what.

Now the master — read the English literati — has found interesting and even racy what the slave — read black writer — has written about himself (most black writers are still male). Black literature is established; sometimes when the writer is amenable to the white view of other

blacks, it is lifted from 'black literature' to 'literature'. But one thing the master does not like is when the black writer (read 'slave') is so presumptuous as to describe not himself but 'master'. *Natives* does that.

The natives of the title are white men. Lamming implies they must be civilised. The civilising process is threefold. The black slave rebels, the white free labourer rebels and the white female, attached by emotion and sexual desire, also rebels. The last knows the master best, from the inside so to speak, and is revolted by

the personality that can enslave as it expresses itself in the intimacy of the sexual relationship. Women, Lamming says, 'are a future that men must learn'. It is a book that women, white and black, will more fully comprehend than men. If colonialism and manhood bed down together, then equating Black Power with the establishment of black manhood is just another call for black capitalism.

Selma James

DOCK BRIEF

Jamaican Donat Gomez, appearing at the Birmingham Crown Court last March was found not guilty of the murder of Maureen Armstrong, a Stoke-on-Trent prostitute found in a Hanley car park on Sunday, 25 March 1973.

This was Gomez's fourth trial. During the second and third, the defence, led by Rudy Narayan, alleged that Det. Chief Supt. Terence O'Connell of New Scotland Yard had fabricated evidence against Gomez in respect of the murder charge; that O'Connell had conspired with members of the Staffordshire Constabulary to pervert the course of justice; and that he, O'Connell, had committed perjury in his evidence. Defence Counsel also accused the trial judge at Stafford, Mr. Justice Ashworth, of siding with the prosecution and of distorting evidence in favour of the prosecution's case.

Gomez had made a written complaint to the Commissioner, Metropolitan Police, about the allegations, and the Deputy Chief Constable of Derby sat throughout the Stafford and Birmingham trials taking notes for the enquiry that now follows O'Connell's conduct in bringing a charge of murder against Gomez.

The prosecution case against Gomez was constructed on the fact that he could not account for his movements between 11.30 pm and 1.30 am on the night of the murder, that he had tried to get two women to tell lies to the police about his movements on the night, and that he was seen in and around the centre of Hanley where the murdered woman was last seen alive at about the material time. Added to this, Gomez was also alleged to have confessed to a police officer in a police cell the night following his arrest and to have made a complete and full confession to a fellow-prisoner while on remand in the hospital wing of Risley Remand Centre. In addition, the prosecution called evidence to show that male sperm found on the dead woman's coat could have come from Gomez, that scratches found on the deceased's face could have come from a ring worn by Gomez, and that paint found under the dead woman's fingernails could have come from the accused's car.

The first point upon which the prosecution relied, that Gomez was unable to account for two hours of his movements on the night of the murder, brought out

some interesting 'first' blood in cross-examination. The witness concerned, a Mrs. B, had first told the police that *Gomez had left her about 1.30 am that morning*, which would have given Gomez a complete alibi. However, in between her telling police the truth and then changing her story to saying that he had really left her two hours earlier, at 11.30 pm, it emerged that *she had been taken into a police station one Saturday night by CID officers, that she had spent nine hours in the police station and then had returned home to her parents battered and bruised and injured. She then changed her story.* More than this, when she changed her story, to allege that Gomez had left her at 11.30 pm, at least eight other witnesses came forward to say that both she and Gomez were in another place at the same time. So much for the beaten-out story by courtesy of Hanley CID.

But the real guts of the police conspiracy and fabrication were yet to come. It transpired that the witnesses who were alleged to have seen Gomez that night in the centre of Hanley had not made this allegation until the defendant was charged with murder, that two out of the three had been first shown a single photo of Gomez before being invited to pick his photo out of a dozen others, that the third woman had made three statements to the police before Gomez's arrest without making that allegation, and that all three, by sheer coincidence, were fellow prostitutes, the same occupation as the deceased.

The sperm found on the coat of Maureen Armstrong, an active prostitute, was found to have come from Group B, or about 7 per cent of the male population. The scratches were found, in the opinion of a Home Office pathologist, to be caused most likely by the face being pressed into the ground, and the paint found under her fingernails was found to be the same as the paint that covered large areas of the cafe where she had worked. (This last bit of information was evidence that was withheld from the defence and only came in accidentally from a nervous witness after two others had collapsed in the witness box.) The confession that was alleged against Gomez was found to be completely inconsistent with the forensic and scientific evidence and the attempt to stitch Gomez up with

'verbals' came apart at the seams.

This was a case in which the police enquiry had unearthed evidence that the dead woman was last seen alive quarrelling in the company of a white man. There was also evidence that later that night a white man, answering the same description, tried to get a taxi to Macclesfield, that the dead woman had lived in Manchester, that she had been brutally assaulted in the past by a boyfriend who lived in Manchester, and that she was living in fear of death threats made to her very recently before her death by this ex-boyfriend. And yet, for reasons best known to the man from Scotland Yard, this man seeking a taxi to Macclesfield (Manchester) at the dead of night, described by the taxi driver as out of breath and frightened, was never interviewed by the police.

WORK IN BIRMINGHAM

The Birmingham Black Community needs YOU

1. **Residential couple** to work at Harambee House Community Home for homeless youth. Awareness and experience essential. Salary up to £3,000 pa.
2. **Residential female worker** needed to work with team of predominantly male workers. Special responsibility to young homeless women. Salary up to £1,6000 pa.
3. **Female community worker** — active worker — to initiate activities with young women in Handsworth community. Salary j.n.c. scale £1,600 pa.
4. **Pre-school project coordinator** to establish relationship with existing child-minders, playgroup leaders and other bodies. Help in setting up of nursery school and knowledge of African and Caribbean cultures essential. Salary £1,650.

Applications, due by the end of July, in writing to Harambee House Association, 27/29 Grove Lane, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 9SN. Tel: 021-554 8479.

of Nkrumah's one time friendship and collaboration with Padmore, these are far more enlightening about Padmore's reactionary beliefs after he chose to desert the communist movement than Padmore's own attempts at self-justification.

For a realistic view of the contribution of the Soviet Union and the international communist movement to the national liberation movement Tom Strokes ought to read Castro, Cabral, Arafat and others as involved in the actual struggles of the peoples for national liberation.

Ken Biggs
Chairman, Walthamstow branch, Communist Party,
248 Forest Road
London E.17.

TV Adoption: Not The Issue

Sir,

The 'World in Action' programme on adoption on Monday, 13 May, was to my mind offensive from three points of view and should be of grave concern to every

black person in this country.

Firstly, the impression was given that most children who are eligible for adoption are abandoned by their parents. This is not true. The reasons why children are put in care are numerous but often not the fault of the parents who are overwhelmed by circumstances and whose problems are not acknowledged by both the State and the Social Services Department.

Local authorities have substantial powers to keep children in care, once there, and I know of many cases of mothers who had literally to fight to get their child out of care. Also, social service departments are often not as helpful to parents who want to keep their children, as to those who 'want' to have them adopted, fostered, or put into care.

The main fault lies with society, which feels the need to punish parents who do not fit into the stereotype family group. The fact is that the 'World in Action' programme dwelt on the wrong end of the problem, and their claim that they would now put children up for sale for fostering shows an obscene lack of thought as to the *real* problems of deprived children and the struggles of the lone or deprived parent.

Secondly, I question the morality of putting children up for sale. I know from my own experience that the last thing I would have wanted at 10 years of age is for my 'problem' to be broadcast over the national TV network. I even felt inhibited about letting my school-mates know I was living in a Dr. Barnardo's Home. For whose benefit are these children being adopted anyway, and how much does the publicity of television trivialise a sensitive issue like adoption?

And thirdly, two black children were being offered to the benevolent arms of people waiting to guide an inadequate immigrant-child to the lofty heights of middle-class idealism and expectation. That a black child should have to feel indebted to white society for this 'liberation' makes me sick (if indeed the child is able to fulfill the expectations of his new parents).

That we are on the bottom of the English class strata is quite obvious. The number of black children in care is about 25 per cent of the total, a vastly disproportionate figure to the number of black children in this country. That black women, who are deprived or are lone parents, have a poor image of themselves and therefore will not fight a system that labels them as inadequate, and thus persuades them to give up their children, is also obvious. What we should not tolerate is the brazen insult of having a fat, over-fed, American entrepreneur do-gooder, giving away our children on television and making it seem as if we don't want them!

What do we do about the situation? Set up a black adoption society? I have a sneaking suspicion that such a proposal would be unacceptable in a country which is reknowned for its refusal to recognise black people's need to fend off similar oppression. Also, wouldn't its rules for adoption be the same as the ones current-

ly in existence? Good income, preferably Christian, high expectancy level, and oppressively 'normal'. And, as I explained, adoption societies are not the *real* issue.

The solution rests with a changing of society and its priorities. We must give parents the facilities to look after their own children — rather than foster parents. Black people must articulate their grievances and demand with other women the facilities of day care centres, higher maternity benefits, decent housing and higher incomes. We must stop accepting the insidious garbage thrown at us by the media and television which can only deal with our blackness by laughing at us and producing programmes that show how docile and stupid black people are. We must in fact, defend ourselves, and think of ways of doing so.

Mark Eaton
28 Endlesham Road
London SW12.

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The last issue sold out completely within ten days of being printed. Much of this was due to the magnificent response of the readers: copies were sold in six new outlets obtained in East London by a volunteer; 150 copies were sold by supporters in Leeds; 200 copies were sold around Brixton; an extra 100 went out through Asian grocers; 59 copies were sold in 15 minutes at the University of Kent. Northampton Council for Community Relations took copies. Barnsley I.S. ordered 6 copies. That is just a small selection. Orders for bulk copies have come in from Bangladesh, Trinidad, St. Vincent, Paris and America. This is the spirit to keep up!

Six people last month replaced their ordinary £2 subscription with a £5 Fighting one. Donations to the fighting fund have started to come in, ranging from a 50p donation from a Manchester reader to a £2 per quarter standing order from a supporter in South London. The fighting fund is open. Now it needs your support.

Volunteers have been coming forward too. Someone comes in once a week to cut papers for our reference library; others are helping on the Black Legal Advice Service; three extra people helped with the layout of this issue; three others helped with London distribution. Other people, too many to detail them all, have helped with articles, news tip-offs and photographs. Advertising in the magazine is being expanded with the help of another contact, and publicity for the magazine is being increased with your help - e.g. 100 copies of our advertising leaflet were given out to World Development Movement supporters in Edinburgh; 20 copies through another supporter in Leeds. A great deal of advertising material is now being displayed on notice-boards in colleges, libraries and other facilities throughout the country.

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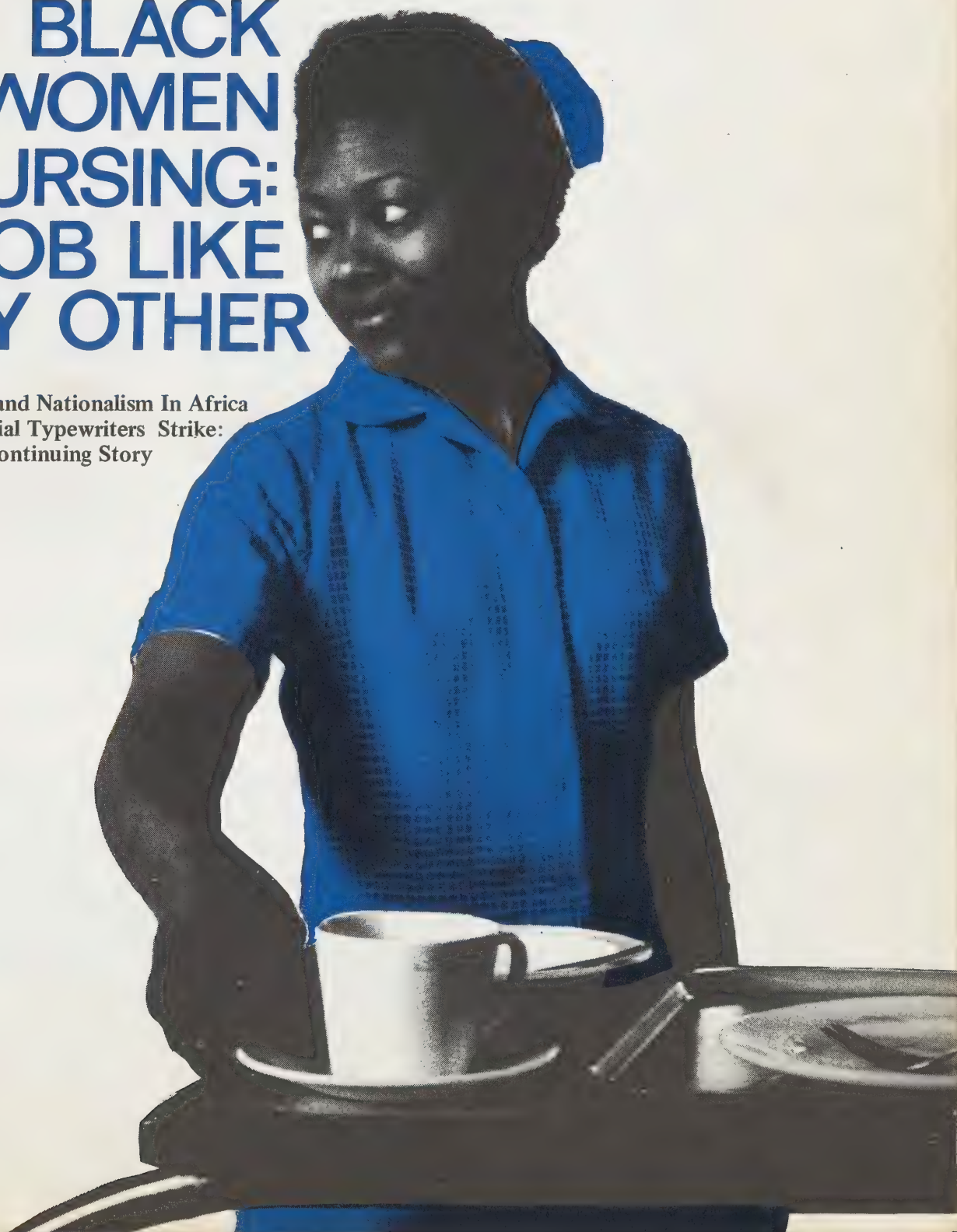
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AUGUST 1974 15p

BLACK WOMEN & NURSING: A JOB LIKE ANY OTHER

Class and Nationalism In Africa
Imperial Typewriters Strike:
The Continuing Story



LETTERS

Sir,

'Angola, Guinea and Mozambique – For Whom Does the Bell Toll?'. This headed a piece by Peregrine Worsthorne, the right-wing political commentator of the *Sunday Telegraph* (28 April 1974).

The coup in Portugal, he warns, tolls the demise of Portuguese hegemony in the above enumerated African countries followed by the imminent demise of the South African racist regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa. Of course all these might be true, and one hopes it is so. But it would be naive to suppose that all it would need to complete the liberation of Africa is a military putsch in Portugal, and in fact Peregrine Worsthorne is not that naive. He envisages the possibility that if General Spínola were to withdraw from Southern Africa, a denouement that does not necessarily follow from the General's book, the South African racist regimes will move northwards to perpetuate the hegemony of Western imperialism in the southern continent. Peregrine does not baulk at the possibility of the NATO countries, particularly the United States, stepping in to fill the breach, if the grip was to prove loose for these avowedly fascist regimes.

It is this later denouement that is more likely to be a consequence of the development which is now taking place in Portugal. And if African people are to win this inevitable confrontation, it is important that we are clear in our minds what must be done. First of all, we must concede that the inevitable continental polarisation of the conflict is a manifestation of the brilliant and protracted struggle which the African people of Angola, Mozambique and Guine Bissau have successfully waged against the Portuguese ruling classes and their NATO collaborators. If the US government were to step in to usurp the conflict, and there is no evidence to suppose that their disgrace in Vietnam is going to deter them, then it means that the resistance which has been flaming in the Portuguese enclaves must engulf the whole of the continent, and it is to warn for whom the bell tolls, when this particular process unfolds, that this particular piece is about.

To appreciate it, the African people must be made aware, more than they have hitherto been, of the nature of resistance which has been taking place in Angola, Guinea and Mozambique. As President Nyerere conceded:

It is comparatively easy to get independence from Colonial power – especially one which claims to base its national morality on the principles of freedom and democracy. Our Angola, Mozambique and Guinean brothers, or for that matter all

African people south of the Zambesi, have not been that 'lucky'. On the contrary they have been waging a bitter liberation struggle. And as the late Amílcar Cabral, one of the forebears of the resistance movement, said, a 'liberation struggle is a revolution and does not end the moment when the National Flag is raised and National Anthem played'. He continues:

The Neo-colonialist situation is not resolved by nationalist solution; it demands the destruction of the capitalist structure implanted in the national territory by imperialism and correctly postulates a socialist solution.

And he goes on:

Our countries are fighting so that insults may no longer rule our countries . . . so that our people may never more be exploited by Imperialists . . . not only by people with a white [pink] skin, because we do not confuse exploitation . . . with the colour of men's skins, and we do not ever want exploitation in our countries, not even by black people.

And in case anybody is squeamish about it, he adds:

If we accept the principle that the liberation struggle is a revolution, and that it does not finish when the National Flag is raised, and the National Anthem played, we will see that there is not and cannot be National liberation without the use of liberating violence by the Nationalist Forces to answer the criminal violence by the agents of Imperialism. Nobody can doubt that whatever its local characteristics, imperialist domination implies a state of permanent violence against the nationalist forces.

And so we come back from where we entered, for whom the bell tolls? In the long run, it rattles for the forces of Western imperialism and their local racist agents; but in the medium term it also clatters for that underdeveloped middle-class of the African bourgeoisie, which finds its chief role in fulfilling the cheap-jack's function of acting as an 'intermediary between the authentic African national interest and that of Western Imperialism'.

S. Nwosu

London

Sir,

I have read *Race Today* for the past two or three years, but whilst applauding your emergence as a campaigning organ for black and other oppressed peoples, I have become increasingly disenchanted with the 'revolutionary purity' of your editorials.

Take your editorial on Portugal in the July issue. Relying for your information on that 'revolutionary' newspaper, the *Guardian*, you describe the Portuguese Socialist and Communist Parties as agents of 'liberal social control', seeking to end the recent strikes in Portugal. Your view appears to be that any strike is good, and deserves our automatic support. Perhaps you also supported the recent fascist-type strike of the Ulster Workers'

Council, or the 'housewives' strike against the Popular Unity Government in Chile, or the dockers' and meat porters' strike and march in support of Enoch Powell in this country?

I imagine that you agree with me that before supporting a strike or other industrial action, we examine its aims. If we believe the *Guardian*, who apparently 'tells us all', then the recent strikes in Portugal had progressive aims and therefore we should support them. But others, notably those who have been fighting fascism in Portugal for the last 20 or 30 years, have a different story. They maintain that the strikes are being organised by elements opposed to the April 25 movement and are seeking a return to fascism. (See particularly the statement of the Portuguese Communist Party, 30 May in 'Comment', June 15.) Is it not possible that they might be right? After all, the *Guardian* has hardly distinguished itself by fighting for revolution and socialism in this country. Why should we trust its coverage of central and sensitive political events in Portugal?

I realise from your use of italics in the *Guardian* quotation that your aim is to demonstrate that the Socialist and Communist Parties offer no prospect for those interested in liberation and revolution in Portugal. Unfortunately for you, many tens of thousands of the Portuguese working class appear to take a contrary viewpoint.

Our prime responsibility is one of solidarity with the Portuguese workers and the liberation movements; not to pontificate on their supposed weaknesses/mistakes based on information culled from the capitalist press.

David Wynn
74 Tollington Road
London N7 6PD

Sir,

It was with considerable apprehension that we noted that the full-page advertisement for Oxford publications in the July issue of *Race Today* carried a notification of John R. Baker's book entitled *Race* and quoted a glowing passage from the *Times Literary Supplement* on it.

Considering the useful review by Arnold and Rothman which appeared in your June issue regarding this dangerous tome, with which we assume you would associate yourself, and the July editorial on the N.U.S. resolution against racism, it is difficult to understand how you could allow publicity to be given to this volume within your covers. Editorial responsibility and the raising of advertising revenue have to be aligned.

Sheila Allen and Christopher R. Smith
University of Bradford
Bradford Yorkshire BD7 1DP

EDITORIAL

WATCH, LEARN AND SUPPORT

It was appropriate that May 1st was the day chosen by 27 Asian women and 12 Asian men to walk out of section 61 of Imperial Typewriters. For that day, symbolic throughout the world as a workers' day, marked an apparently simple dispute about bonus arrangements and racism in the factory. In essence, it is not simple at all for it implicitly poses questions that reverberate far beyond Leicester, threatening thereby to penetrate and destroy the impasse between labour and capital in the UK.

Against the behaviour of the union, entrenched in forms of thinking and doing formulated years ago, they have posed constant and creative self-activity as an alternative to the stifling procedure of the 'correct way of doing things'. Where the original strength and energy of working class struggle to build the trade union movement has become subverted by capital through the Labour Party, the TUC, the Communist Party, the dead hand of bureaucracy, the Asian workers pose new alternatives. The trade unions exist now, but they are not going to be here for ever. Through the mass meetings, the constant picketing, the willingness to examine new channels of struggle, the Imperial Typewriters' workers have not only dealt the old ideas of trade unionism a decisive blow, but they have also jarred the thinking of a working class accustomed by years of imperialism to look upon Asian workers as docile labour destined for ever to occupy the lowest rungs of the labour hierarchy.

And in this approach, the women have been constantly to the fore. In the fighting on the picket line, the attendance at the mass meeting, the willingness to put forward political solutions, they have smashed for ever the myth of the passive Asian woman.

We welcome the request from the strikers for support in their struggle. We throw all our resources behind them. They came to this magazine because it recognises the independent self-activity of the black working class; because it has national and international contacts; because it supports no established tendency or party for to base yourself in the independent self activity of any section of the class is in itself a tendency because it has maintained a constant and critical support for the upsurge of Asian strikes over the last two years. These

strikes have posed fundamental challenges to the ability of the trade union machine to deliver the mass of workers, bound hand and foot by social compacts and productivity deals and measured day work, and a hundred other devices, firmly into the hands of the class enemy.

When we attack the trade union movement for its racism we like the Asian workers, do not attack working class organisation, be it black or white. In fact we know that working class organisation of the trade union are not necessarily one and the same thing. Instead we note the apparently infinite capacity of capital to absorb and negate the forms of struggle our class throws up, whether negating and absorbing it by way of social democracy, the vanguard party, or black or white nationalism. Against this we say that the capacity to negate and absorb is not infinite, that the struggle continues and at its creative best leads the mass movement forward through its vibrancy and unity. Today it certainly is the East African Asian workers who are making the running. To the wider mass movement, we say watch and learn, above all, support.

BLACK WOMEN

Since January 1974 the editorial policy of *Race Today* has registered a complete break with those who seek to negate the particularity of the black women's position for some 'larger struggle' whether those who advance it are black men or women, white men or women.

In this current issue we have given over our feature article to a political organisation of black women - The Black Women's Group. In an article, 'Black Women and Nursing: A Job Like Any Other', they make the link between the specific conditioning of black women working - in the family and the jobs they do as female waged workers - in this case service work. This link has had important implications for the National Health Service. For black women do not believe in the myth of the dignity of women's work, or myths about professionalism. In short, their history as slaves and colonials tells them that service equals servitude.

The strike at Imperial Typewriters raises the position of immigrant women - as women as well as workers. They have demanded equal pay and raised a series of grievances that are specific to them as women. Nurses too have joined the struggle for more money for the work they do which is an extension of the work women do in the home. Black nurses have used Agencies - as a method of refusing the terms of service work. There is also a growing section of young black women who are refusing altogether this type of work.

Whatever methods women find to struggle and in whatever sphere they make the struggle - in their own way - they are raising issues that face us all. To subsume these struggles to the 'general struggle' is not only to be racist and anti-women but anti-working class.

For in raising these issues Asian women, nurses and the ancillaries are putting forward precisely what the general struggle should be.

Lorraine Burt
Leila Hassan

Race Today

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Students Fight Fascism in Kent

Late in 1973, the National Front organised a public meeting in Canterbury, Kent. Over 100 workers and students, shouting anti-fascist slogans, massed at the doors of the hall and refused to allow fascists through. The police, in typical fashion, bludgeoned a way through the demonstrators for about 40 fascists, including the Hitlerite Webster and his thugs.

On Saturday, 8 June 1974, the NF announced a second public meeting in Canterbury (a sort of dress rehearsal for the murderous confrontation which followed at Red Lion Square exactly a week later). Over 300 workers and students marched through Canterbury to the hall, and were prevented from entering by a cordon of police. About 15 demonstrators who did get through were attacked by NF officials with metal poles and chairs, without any effort to restrain them, let alone arrest them, on the part of the police. The counter-demonstrators put the public address system out of commission and got hold of the Canterbury NF Organiser's file, before they were ordered to leave by police with dogs. The anti-fascists then picketed the hall to prevent the meeting from taking place. Once again they were assaulted by police and ten were arrested.

Apart from a fraternal letter on House of Commons Paper, from William Deedes, senior Tory MP and a speech, with all the racist clichés in the book, prepared for Martin Webster for the meeting, the organiser's NF file revealed that Webster is



The London demonstration in memory of 21-year-old student Kevin Gateley, killed fighting fascism. Passing down Whitehall, it was keenly watched by right-winger Harold Soref, fresh from his adventures with the students of Oxford.

alleged to have fiddled Midland election funds.

The police announced that they had cancelled the public meeting. (Later we found out that they were lying blatantly – it was simply postponed.) The demonstrators, however, marched to the police station and demanded the release of those arrested.

After 2½ hours they were all released. One had been beaten up in the police station and could hardly walk. They were charged with the usual 'obstruction', 'insulting behaviour', etc. One was charged with carrying an offensive weapon, namely, his boots.

It is ironic that many charges

were made under the Public Order Act, 1936, and the Race Relations Act, 1968 – supposedly anti-fascist legislation, but which is being used by the stalwarts of 'law and order' to protect the campaign of racism and fascism being promoted by the National Front and other right-wing organisations.

The Kent University Students Union played a leading part in organising the counter-demonstration, in keeping with its policy not to allow fascist or racist speakers. It has severely criticised back-peddling by the NUS leadership, and its policy of kowtowing to liberal rubbish about free speech is a non-starter, by excluding any statement from the anti-fascist demonstrators, while publishing a biased NF statement. Not a word was said about their racist, anti-worker and anti-democratic policies.

The Kent University Students Union are also leading supporters for the creation of a National Overseas Students Organisation, fully aware that NUS leadership pays lip service to the interests of its overseas members, but has organised no campaign to improve the conditions under which overseas students function in this country. Nor have they publicised the situation that most of the countries face on account of their neo-colonial relationship to Britain. Kent students see such an organisation playing an important part in the struggle against racism and fascism in this country, and providing international political perspectives.

From Afro Asian Caribbean Society University of Kent

RUDY RESIGNS – POLICE CO-OPT

The appointment of Metropolitan Police Commander Peter Marshall as head of the Community Relations unit in November last year was turned into a fine publicity stunt when, on the first day at his new job, he attended a party given by West Indians at the black-owned Coach and Horses Pub in Brixton. He was fed West Indian food and we were told by the *Sunday Times* (4.11.73) that, 'he thrashed out arguments and made friends [and that] when next there is an incident in Brixton, the negotiations are more likely than ever to be between men who respect each other than between antagonistic coppers and immigrants'.

Among those who supped with the Commander was Rudy Narayan, a West Indian barrister who has since become a local councillor in Brixton. However, the theory that 'negotiations are more likely than ever to be between men who respect each other than between antagonistic coppers and immigrants' appears to have

had a serious relapse. Rudy has been a firm believer in the Police Liaison Committee, strategy in which members of the black community sit with policemen to talk things out, rather than have them fought out. Our Rudy has become disenchanted, and in a letter to Commander Flynn, states the reasons and offers his resignation:

'Dear Commander Flynn,

I write with much regret to say that I feel unable to attend any more at Brixton Police Station as a member of the Police/Community Liaison Committee. I have, as you will know, been heavily criticised for 'wining and dining with Brixton police' but until now I have taken those criticisms because I felt my critics were wrong and that I was right to pursue the social initiative. However, having recently attended Brixton Police station and having been "verbalised" as being abusive and (perhaps more to the point), Chief Inspector Owen Kelly clearly preferring the version

told him by his P.C. at the desk to mine supported by the Vicar of Brixton and a Law Centre solicitor, I do honestly feel that nobody is safe in Brixton anymore and that Brixton Police are capable of framing anyone whenever they feel like it; I begin to feel the sort of anger and resentment being felt far and wide through Brixton over the whole alleged framing of Horace Parkinson and young Robin Sterling – two of the Brockwell 3; I feel that to carry on by leading Brixton West Indians in the Annual Cricket Match would not be in keeping with the general feeling of the community while these two remain behind prison bars and I myself am not prepared to carry on with Annual Fixture any more.

Further, the treatment by Brixton Police of five of my brother Borough Councillors calls not for a conciliation but for demands into a Ratepayers Inquiry into the activities generally of Brixton Police and since I will be myself joining in this de-

mand I feel I had better put my cards on the table early on.

From now on I will be only seeking that the police do their job efficiently, fairly and honestly as they are paid out of public funds to do.

Yours most sincerely,
Cllr. R. Narayan.

The other West Indian on the committee is Courtney Laws, the director of the Brixton Neighbourhood Centre and lynchpin in the CRC network in the area.

He has not resigned. When contacted for comment we were informed that Mr. Laws is presently in Moscow. He did not take Inspector Kelly with him. Kelly was available for comment. He praised Rudy's work in the community, spoke very highly of him and rounded off by saying that Rudy would be most welcome on the committee were he to change his mind.

Well Rudy, they even managed to co-opt your resignation.

NATIONAL MOBILISATION FOR IMPERIAL STRIKERS



Pickets outside Imperial Typewriter's premises in London were joined by building workers from the nearby Lovell's site on Guilford Street.

While the Transport and General Workers' Union prevaricates over the question of the Imperial Typewriters' strikers (see main News Background story), the strike committee asked *Race Today* to set up a national co-ordinating committee to raise support and money through mass national action. The Co-ordinating Committee is comprised of Asian and European immigrant workers, most of whom have been involved in recent strikes against union and management, together with other individuals who have in the past co-ordinated with *Race Today* on propagandising these strikers.

As we go to press, the first day of action has just ended. Pickets have been mounted outside factories, shops and warehouses belonging to or acting as agents for Litton Industries.

In London, starting with the day of action on 3 July, Litton's main showroom, opposite Russell Square

tube station, was picketed by 20 to 30 people all day. They were joined at lunchtime by building workers from Lovells site in Guilford Street. In Leeds, 40 people picketed a shop which acts as the main agent for Adler, a subsidiary of Littons. In Birmingham, the main Imperial showroom was picketed — and the manager had to come out and ask the people to move on because he was 'embarrassed by it all'. In Nottingham, a picket started at a depot and moved into the middle of town, while in Liverpool, C&A stores, a main typewriter outlet, was covered by about 20 people. A small picket was mounted in the middle of Newcastle and Sheffield, while in Hull and Leicester the two factories were themselves picketed.

Further and escalating action is planned. In London an all-day picketing of Head Office from now to the end of the strike, while a major national campaign is under way in the labour movement to take speakers from the strike committee and the national solidarity committee.

Two important dates to note are: 16 July, when there will be a mass picket outside the Leicester factory, and 21 July, when a mass demonstration will be held in Leicester. The coordinating committee can be contacted through this magazine, and we call for all readers in localities not already covered by local ad hoc groups to contact us with a view to setting up activity against Litton Industries.

WHAT IS YOUR RELIGION?

Despite the promises and the cajoling from the Home Secretary, the harassment of Asian people under the guise of checking their legality continues. The farcical illegal immigrant 'amnesty', which so upset the National Front and the Tory right wing (but which, in fact, has resulted in a handful of people finding their

position regularised) has already been well documented elsewhere.

What is not so well reported is the everyday reality of the Asian existence. Two cases illustrate the point

On 27 June, while the Army and police were throwing their cordons around Heathrow airport on the pretext of a guerilla scare warning, four Asian workers leaving the premises

were stopped by a joint patrol of police and armed soldiers. For a few minutes, they were questioned and then taken to the airport police station and given a proper grilling. They were asked what country they came from, how long they had been in the country, where they worked and how long they had been there. Then they were asked what religion they were and, because they were Muslims,

whether they had any sympathy with Palestinian terrorists and what they thought of terrorism in general terms. After more questions about their friends at the airport and outside, and about their own legal status within the country, all of which took rather more than an hour, they were set free to return to their families and friends sadder but wiser men.

WHERE IS YOUR PASSPORT?

The other case is, if anything, rather more alarming. One of the main points of Robert Carr's period as Home Secretary was the promise that people would not be stopped and asked for their passports at random. This magazine has already exposed that promise for the farce it was. Roy Jenkins, however, was apparently even keener to stop this form of harassment.

On Saturday, 1 June, a 38-year-old civil servant, Brij Mohan Sood, was standing at the back of his parked car in Lewisham loading the family shopping into the boot. A white youth driving a Cortina, ignoring his gesticulations and frantic cries, calmly backed into the parking space behind Mr. Sood and neatly trapped him by the legs between the cars. Shouting with pain, Sood told the other driver to move forward. He inched his car to a stop, and when Mr. Sood, who is neither a big man nor a fighter, asked for an explana-

tion, the other man started punching him. A young student, Surinder Kapur, attempted to intervene and was punched to the ground, where he lay dazed in a pool of blood from a gaping head wound. The white youth then calmly walked off to the cheers of an admiring crowd.

Brij Sood hobbled to a phone and called the police to explain what had happened. Fifteen minutes later, his call was answered by the appearance of two constables in a car and an ambulance to take Kapur to hospital. One of the officers asked Sood for his documents, while the other booked him for having an apparently defective tyre. To Sood's protests that he was in pain and that it was the white youth they should be after, they pointed out that as he was in charge of his car, that he should have the documents for it, and anyway he was very lucky to be in this country. Eventually the white youth returned and a few questions were asked of him. He was then

allowed to leave. No suggestion of driving without due care and attention, or assault or leaving the scene of an accident. These, Mr. Sood was informed, are all civil actions.

By now in considerable pain, Sood was eventually allowed to leave, and he went to hospital himself to have his knees strapped up and X-rayed. Kapur had already arrived and was being attended to. His head wound, which needed 16 stitches, kept him in hospital for a week. As soon as the doctors had finished with him the police arrived back on the scene, examined the wound with their own doctor and then, for some reason which is not immediately obvious, asked him for his passport and papers.

Sood has complained to the police and has since been interviewed. He now understands that charges are being considered against the youth, and that police are taking his complaint seriously. Seriously enough for the investigating officer, having heard

the full facts of the case and seen the complaint from the Asian association of which Mr. Sood is a member, to feel bound to explain that immigration was a new thing and the police found it very difficult both to get recruits and to keep them, and to teach them to deal with black people. Certainly he felt the constables were probably wrong, but did Mr. Sood really want them to be punished? He didn't feel it would help police/immigrant relationships and besides, it all took a very long time. Would Mr. Sood let him give the constables a strict telling off in his office and leave it at that?

Brij Sood is a family man and his wife isn't well. He wants to hold down his job and have a quiet life, but he is unhappy that the police investigate the police and nothing apparently happens, and, moreover, that the investigating officer tries to involve him in a cover-up operation which is in itself illegal — conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

IMMIGRANT WORKERS DEFY DISCIPLINE AT FORDS

You may have heard that there was a punch-up at Fords Dagenham between a West Indian brother and a foreman the other day. There's nothing new about that. It happens all the time. But what is new is that this time 100 foremen went on strike for a day, demanding that the brother be sacked.

At Fords the foremen think they are God Almighty. But recently the tide has been turning. There are some sections of workers — usually black — who have sussed that there is a weak link in the chain of command at Dagenham — the foremen!

All the time, the foremen are going sick, with heart attacks and nervous breakdowns. Their Union (ASTMS) is trying to 'improve their conditions', and their campaign reached noble heights the other month — demanding protection/danger money from Fords for fear of personal attacks.

There are now some sections where foremen don't like to go, because every time they show their faces, the men set up a whooping and hollering and name-insulting which makes them very nervous and sick.

Workers at Ford know that once you can get the foremen off your

Worker in 'a bad mood' stops Ford

A Ford worker who was in "a bad mood" deliberately damaged equipment in the body plant and caused a stoppage of work.

The man, Roland John Wright, 20, of Mardyke Estate, Rainham, was employed as a welder in the Ford Body plant and damaged two air lines by welding them and cutting off the flow of air.

The result was a stoppage of work, costing Ford £70, before repairs could get the plant moving again.

Wright's only excuse for the offence was that he was in a bad mood. He has lost his job at Ford because of the damage.

Wright was fined £25 at Barking court last week when he pleaded guilty to causing criminal damage.

back you can begin to get some freedom. This is shown in the way that discipline is beginning to break down in some sections of the factory. Ford knows this, and openly admits that both the quality and quantity of Dagenham-produced cars is declining. The news clipping (above) is only one example. Tonight (3 July), as we are

writing this, we hear that 80 workers in the Assembly Plant sat down on the final assembly lines all night long, blocking any production of cars, in order to get layoff pay for a previous night's layoff.

Ford is clearly worried about a breakdown of discipline. This is shown by the fact that, at the last

wage negotiations, they were pressing for the introduction of 2,000 chargehands as a new layer of supervisors to restore productive discipline. They failed then, but they will try again.

There's no doubt in anybody's mind that the people in the forefront of this attack on Ford discipline are the immigrant workers — Asian, Caribbean, African — because it is these people who not only bear the brunt of heavy work on the assembly lines, but also suffer from the constant wage-cutting layoffs that are becoming Ford policy. Now the flow of immigration has been officially brought to a halt, Ford is trying to recruit workers displaced from closed factories. They are trying to profit from unemployment. They want sheep — with 'a good work record'. But what they are going to get, given the mind-bending conditions of work they force on us — is wolves up their asses.

In the meantime, we believe that the brother concerned has not yet been sacked, but suspended.

Written by Ford workers.

PRITCHARD'S TAKE WORKERS TO THE CLEANERS

The conditions of the Asian women cleaning at London airport (see *Race Today*, May 1974) continues to be a scandal. Although the women cleaning on Terminal One have managed to achieve a grudging time and a half for over time on the morning shift and new rest-room premises, their employers — Allied Industrial Cleaning, a subsidiary of Pritchards Services — have sacked one of the leading workers. Mrs. Pratab Kaur refused to do two jobs at once while doubling up for another woman and was sacked. Lacking real support from the union, the case is now being fought through the Industrial Court as a case of unfair dismissal.

The monthly paper *Hospital Worker* has also examined the operations of Pritchards in the allocation of cleaning contracts in the hospital service. They report that Pritchards now have contracts for 40 hospitals. They add that their tactics there are to exploit union and hospital management's ignorance of Whitley Council agreements — by avoiding any job description of the work their cleaners do, they each employ workers at the cheapest rates and shift them about from contract to contract at will, thereby breaking up any form of organisation. At Moorfields Eye Hospital, a lightning strike by porters extracted a promise to pay porters'

rates to weekend domestics employed by Crothalls. The hospital management committee has acceded to the shop stewards' demand that they will not re-employ Crothalls when their current contract runs out. At the airport, women cleaners are starting to demand that Pritchards and all sub-contractors, who work on cut throat competition and very cheap labour, be thrown out of the terminals and instead the British Airport Authority employ the women direct, thus ensuring them pension and sickness rights.

Pritchards have grown from an annual profit of £116,000 in 1961 (after they had changed from their

original role as rubber plantation owners in Indonesia and used their capital to move into the cleaning business) to an annual profit of £1.48m in 1973. The *Investor's Chronicle*, despite slow growth for a year, advised its readers to hold on to their shares in anticipation of faster growth next year. With directors earning £7,616 annually from Crothalls alone, the average wage paid to workers in the company was just £500 per annum. Profits over the period 1968 to 1972 rose by 116%, while wages rose by just 40%.

The company is now expanding abroad with security firms purchased in South Africa and Canada, cleaning and catering firms in Portugal and France, and a foothold in Australia. The black workers who make up the bulk of their work force in Britain (outside of their new industrial security operation) have started to challenge the company at the airport and in the hospitals. The company which started life as an imperial exploiter in Indonesia will find that the battleground has moved nearer to home.

LEEDS SCHOOL INCIDENT

Rodwell's father told the paper: 'On the fourteenth of June Rodwell had a minor squabble with a friend of his and the two boys were rolling on the floor together. A student teacher separated the boys, and in the scuffle, Rodwell received a blow in the eye.' The group of children were due to return to Leeds on June 13th, and when the injury occurred, it was only superficially treated with TCP. Rodwell was taken to St. James' Hospital when he got back to Leeds. Mr. Stover took him home at 6.30 pm, and his parents weren't in. Rodwell's 17-year-old sister was given little or no explanation of what had happened and no message was left for the parents. No one from the school subsequently made any effort to contact Rodwell's parents

to discuss the matter, even though they live near the school and are on the phone.

Mr. Gentles went to see the headmaster, Mr. Clarke, on Monday 17th June. He says that he was treated discourteously, as if the matter was of no importance, and eventually shown the door. Mr. Gentles has now written to the Town Clerk claiming injury benefit since Rodwell's injury came in school time whilst in the care of teachers. He may also issue a summons against the student teacher concerned.

Chapelton News asked Mr. Clarke for his comments. He said: 'A boy who witnessed the fight said that the student teacher did not strike Rodwell. I do not know how the cut occurred. It was treated by a man experienced in First Aid, and I am certain Mr. Stover did all he could to look after Rodwell.'

APOLOGY

We apologise to those of our subscribers who did not receive the July issue of *Race Today*. This was as a result of an administrative mix-up with the postal authorities. We have taken the decision to send the July issue together with the present one to those who didn't get their copy, and will do what we can to avoid any future repetition.

EDITOR—

IMPERIAL TYPEWRITERS STRIKE:

In the July issue of *Race Today*, we published a full account of the strike at Imperial Typewriters. As we go to press the strike is in its tenth week. Below we update the continuing story as the situation takes new shape, almost by the day.

'This strike is being led by professional agitators. They want a change in society. They want to take over and control the union machinery and they can't do it from inside, so they have to do it from outside I think they are being supported by Chinese communist money. I've had reports of money, of £5 notes changing hands on the picket line'

It has been another tough month for George Bromley as the Imperial Typewriters strike stretches into its tenth week. Forced by the creativity and solidarity of the Asian workforce back into a corner, the T&GWU full-timer has had to retreat from the apparently simple position of rational collaboration with capital into the realms of social fantasy.

While the van from the finance company made its way round Highfield picking up the furniture and belongings of the defaulted HP debtors who are caught in the vicious reality of weeks of battle without even strike pay to feed their families, Mr. Bromley sticks firmly to the position that the strikers should go back to work and sort the whole thing out according to the book. But, as far as the workers are concerned, the strike has lasted ten weeks, it could last ten months but they will not creep back like dogs, with their tails between their legs.

As for Chinese communist money, the whole idea is too much of a joke to even take seriously. The 400 strikers in fact are desperate for money: far from £5 notes changing hands on the picket line the reality is a penny-wise allocation of the meagre funds collected through com-

munity and political organisations and meetings — the Birmingham Sikh Temple contributed £125, the Southall IWA put in £50, a meeting of the Birmingham Anti-Racist committee put up £14, a collection from the European Immigrant Workers Action Committee collected up £12 after a meeting, the Edinburgh Women's Conference put together £40. And so it goes on, the money coming in in dribs and drabs, the needs of the strikers measure in hundreds of pounds weekly.

But despite the combined pressure of management manipulation, union collaboration and a constant barrage of racist propaganda from the Leicester branch of the National Front, the strike holds firm. Where an ordinary strike would have collapsed within days for lack of union support, the Imperial workers have responded with a strength and creativity that will change the shape of future working class struggle. Free of the traditions of years of stifling union bureaucracy, newly proletarianised after their mass exodus from East Africa, they have brought to the struggle a spirit, an approach, a willingness to try any tactic, that has lessons for the whole wider labour movement.

We reported in our last issue how the strike is firmly controlled from a daily mass grievance meeting. Held in a local community centre every morning, the grievance meeting has evolved through the struggle from a simple forum for a catalogue of ills to a living instrument of the mass of workers. Here there can be no separation of 'leaders' from 'led'. Where another strike would lead to an

estrangement between the full-timer in the local office, visiting the picket line once a week to report on progress and using the phone to keep the negotiations in progress; where another strike would even be firmly in the hands of the strike committee, communication and discussion taking place only amongst those militant enough to attend the daily picket line, this one is led from the mass meeting and that is firmly where the power lies. Every decision of the strike committee, every move and ploy by management, each newspaper report and meeting addressed is communicated within that mass meeting. With such an arrangement there can be no closed-door negotiations, no carefully engineered sell-out, no space for management wedges between sections of workers.

There has been a profound change in the content of the strike. Where it started from a gut feeling of economic wrong doing and racial exploitation, the way that each section of the state and of capital has intervened and shown its hand has brought a developing response from the strikers. At first, it was simple: it was about bonus rates and producing first 16, then 18, then 20 and then 22 machines everyday for the same wages. It was about racism in the election of stewards and the way that white workers could clock-in their mates while Asian workers were pulled up for doing so. And it was about the dignity of human beings, the right to go to the doctor when they were ill, or to take time off to look after the children. But with each turn of the screw, with each manoeuvre and intervention by the multiple instruments of

THE CONTINUING STORY



social control, there has been a development of consciousness by the strikers. One by one, they have had to be confronted and dealt with.

The T&GWU, supposedly the organisation of the working class for the fight against capital, has been exposed as a vehicle for the further accumulation of capital. This has been the case from Woolfs and Rockware Glass in West London in 1965, through Malmic Lace and E.E. Jaffe and Jones Stroud and British Celanese and Harwood Cash in 1973, through Perivale Gutterman and Coventry Art Castings earlier in 1974 to the current dispute at Imperial Typewriters.

The workers have stayed within the union framework — in May, they chartered buses to come to London and lobby Transport House. 200 of them called for the strike to be made official; an official enquiry, and ex-officio payments of £5 a week from the Hardship Fund. And Moss Evans, a national organiser, felt the power of the workers' demands. An enquiry was granted, based around Brian Mather, the Birmingham Regional Secretary, who assembled a collection of the Midlands' better known union activists to look into the conduct of Bromley and Weaver and their role in Litton International's scheme of things. But no strike pay, no ex-officio payments.

The enquiry was conducted with due care and caution. The strikers welcomed it. 'What Will the T&G Enquiry Bring?' demanded their Strike Bulletin Number Four. 'The T&G's position on the question of discrimination and the employment of black workers is good', they wrote. 'At least one can say that the response is bound to be good because the T&G is not a reactionary union.' But the reality was different: as the enquiry progressed, one day with the strikers, two

days with management and union officials, and back to the strikers with some leading supplementary questions, the workers felt a nagging suspicion that all was not right:

The very fact that all the problems [of toilets and bonus and discrimination and the rest of it] have been allowed to exist is an indictment of the union and its officials. And the fact that there was a T&G enquiry is an admission that things are not all good at the local level What we are hoping is that the enquiry will clear up the mess created by Bromley and Weaver at the local level. The actual problem of the strikers at this stage is that they do not have the backing of their union. For them, it will be absolutely impossible for them to make any advance unless this is first settled. The strikers do not even have the right to negotiate with management except through its union. The strikers feel orphaned without this union support. But how will the enquiry handle this? From the point of view of the strikers it's very simple. Throw the bastards out.

The unofficial reaction looked good: the enquirers told the strike committee, sotto voce, that they had won. It was only a question of finding a face-saving formula for the whole thing to be settled. One or two outstanding points had to be settled, of course — for example, the question of Bennie Bunsee, the so-called leader of the strike, the 'outsider', labelled by George Bromley as an agitator. Dump Bunsee, the argument seemed to run, and quiet down on the question of the elected leadership of the strike not getting their jobs back, and something could soon be sorted out. Machines would run again, typewriters would roll off the production line and Litton's profits for 1974 would be again ensured. Bunsee, like the rest of the committee, the servant of that daily meeting, was not to be dumped, replied the strikers.

'It's purely an industrial issue,' Brian Mather told a Midweek reporter, 'but

there are forces at work trying to escalate it such as the National Front There is a language problem of course. And George Bromley, the local officer, has been personally and perhaps emotionally involved. He has been subjected to a scurrilous and personal attack.'

As we go to press, the official enquiry has not been published, but the strikers continue, despite the evidence of their treatment over the last ten weeks, to defend the union: 'We have a high regard for what the union can achieve once it is determined to flex its muscles and to take up the genuine grievance of the workers. But for this to happen the trade union officials must be responsive to the genuine grievances of the members.'

As the strike drags on, the workers have formed political discussion sessions around larger issues. What was the Asian's role in Africa, and how did it fit into the Imperial set-up? Who are the National Front and what is their influence in the trade union movement? What is the position of women in Asian society and in the broader framework? How is their struggle different from the men's struggle and how is it being waged? These latter questions bear witness to the central power base of the strike — the independent intervention of Asian women.

And underlying it all is a questioning of the role of the union and the common experiences of black workers. When the IWA unionises a complete foundry and then hands over the membership to the T&G, is that really the best way forward for black workers? Why does Bromley play the role he plays? Is it simply explained in terms of his association with the old Deakinite right-wing tradition in the T&G, or does it say more profound things about the broad question of black workers and white workers in the union? If there is a racist rump, as there undoubt-



edly is, on the shop floor of white workers, then how is it best combatted? The Commission of Industrial Relations Report on the dispute at Mansfield Hosiery, which has just been issued, warns against the possibility of black workers moving on their own. The question is also in the air at Imperial Typewriters. And while the role of the union is debated, so is that of Imperial Typewriters.

John Brown, Litton's man at Imperial, claims with one breath both that the firm is an innocent victim, squashed in a sandwich of dispute between the Asian workers and the trade union, and also that there was no difference in their treatment of black and white workers — 'Even as far as the privilege of going to the toilet.'

Sensing that the local arm could not deal with the dispute, Head Office in California have sent over Doug Peters, head of personnel, accompanied by Peter Iron, an ex-American baseball star and an Afro-American. Iron carries with him the company's statement on equal employment opportunity. On cue, he reads it, and thus is expected to emphathise with the black work force to show that if they shut up and lie down, they can end up with a cushy number like himself. Iron has nothing to say on the exclusion of black workers from Litton's high-paying shipyards in Mississippi. His task is to cool out the dispute, to establish a return to work at any cost. He does not carry it off well.

Litton are not, as yet, ready to move production out of Leicester to another source of even cheaper labour: they acknowledge that production has been cut by 25% (strikers claim it's 50%), but it takes time and expense to move a whole facility to, say Zaire, or Singapore. But they frighten the official union, the local shopkeepers and the press, with threats to move out of Leicester altogether.

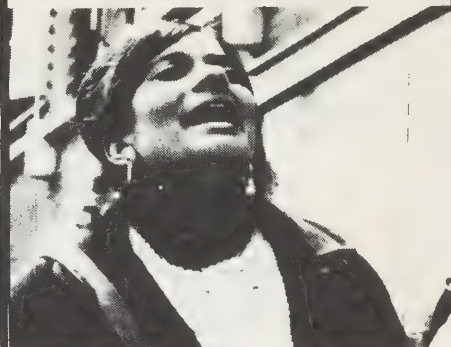
And while Litton scheme on the international map, the picket line continues day by day. Nine workers have now been arrested and charged with assaulting the police and obstruction. The confrontation with the police, the arrival at the Magistrate's Court (Bromley is himself a JP) and the subsequent organisation for funds to fight the defence are simply aspects of the same struggle.

With the confrontation with the police goes the absolute rejection of the rest of the apparatus: the Department of Employment enquiry is seeking to negotiate a return to work while intervening in the question of election of shop stewards. The strikers reject their recommendations. The Race Relations Board too, fresh from its mangling of the workers' case at Harwood Cash, called in by the Strike Committee, has been rejected as a 'Toothless Bulldog' once the strikers had discussed further amongst themselves its past record and social function.

While rejecting these forms of social control, they have relied instead on themselves and their community. Four factories nearby, employing a largely Asian work force, have declared their solidarity and supported the pickets. Two of them alone have collected more than £300, more than the Trades Council — who have anyway refused to support the dispute — could have collected in a month. And they have already called two national demonstrations in Leicester and scheduled a third for 21 July.

When the factory closed for two weeks' holiday, and picketing was suspended, the strikers, so as not to lose contact with each other — and other workers — organised a series of activities: lectures and discussion groups for the workers, two evening concerts, and coach trips for a weekend day-trip to a local beauty spot. They have maintained their pressure on

Support the Strike



- send donations for the strikers
- picket branches of Litton International (Imperial's parent company)
- inform other workers about the struggle
- involve other workers in the struggle

For further information, contact
Race Today

the T&G rank and file nationally with letters to branches all over the country. Where there has been a glimmer of response, in all too few cases, they have sent speakers immediately.

And they have called for a national solidarity committee, co-ordinated by *Race Today*. The tasks are to collect money, to circulate information, to organise pickets on Litton's branches across the globe, to support the pickets and to involve Asian workers and all workers in active support for the struggle.

To every twist and turn of the state, of the union, and of capital both national and internationally, the strikers have posed creativity and a flexible response. If a channel of struggle was open, they have used it. If a political space between ideology and inertia has opened up, they have moved into it. Where the Communist Party, as at the National Women's Conference or in the organisation of pickets in Liverpool, has prevaricated or outrightly lied about the role of the T&G, the strike committee has opened dialogue and activated new sections of support. To the question of the international power of capital, a profound understanding of the class power to combat it.

They continue to demand that the T&G make the strike official. They call on management to take them all back, including their leadership, with no victimisation, and they call for free and democratic elections in the factory. In response to the death of a worker in the last week, allowed back to work because of his poor state of health and need for money, they call for decent factory conditions for all workers. Where the union, the press and capital is playing the strike as a racial one, they name it as a class one, there being no separation here between race and class.

BLACK WOMEN AND NURSING: A JOB LIKE ANY OTHER



In the present struggle nurses for the first time have come out on strike in support of their demands for more money. They have acted in opposition to the myth that women administering to sick, young and old, should not behave in this way.

Nursing is traditionally women's work, especially black women's. In the following article, widely illustrated with interviews, we maintain that the presence of black women in the health industry has been crucial in bringing the struggle to its present stage.

This is not a comprehensive statement

in that most of the nurses who participated in writing it work in London hospitals, and we know that the most militant action has come from outside London. Also all of the nurses are of Afro-Caribbean origin.

We concentrate here on nurses. Because of space limitations we do not deal with the situation of ancillary workers, not because we see them as subsidiary to the hospital structure (as do the nurses' unions). However, we point out that it was these workers, recruited from Southern Europe, Ireland, the Caribbean and

Asia, who first brought the strike weapon to the hospitals in Britain.

— Black Womens Group

Nursing is a 'caring profession', and traditionally the work of women — to be of service not only to their own men and children, but to other people's. No woman is more identified with service work than black women, especially the black women with a slave or colonial past. The relationship between the black woman and nursing, wet nursing or dry nursing, of other peoples' children and other people's husbands and wives, dates from before any National Health Service. Whether working in hospitals as auxiliaries, SEN's or SRN's, in the head of the black nurse from the Caribbean is the echo of slavery; in the head of the Asian nurse is the servitude to Sahib and Memsahib.

The colonial legacy expresses itself today in the young woman who from very early on knows she must take disciplined responsibilities in her own family, for example, for younger sisters and brothers. This legacy is alive in another sense: often the only waged jobs open to women in the ex-colonial world is in the kitchens of the middle and upper classes.

From their traditions in the family and in waged employment in this country and 'at home', flows easily the tradition of black women in hospital work.

We believe we can show that there is a connection between the nationalisation of the Health Service (1948) and the immigration of these workers with this tradition. A health service which was intended to see after the *whole* working class, and not just those who could afford it, would need a tremendous injection of workers who would not expect too much in wages and would not be in a position to challenge their working conditions.

During the last 20 years the class composition of nursing has changed.

A hundred years ago this was said of nurses: 'Many gentlewomen were recruited because it is the belief that this type of nursing required the highest type of women who were well educated' (Report of the Committee for the National Association for providing trained nurses for the sick and poor, 1874). This is not a picture of nurses today and certainly not a description of the recruiting policy of the National Health Service. What used to be a vocation for women of the middle class is now a *job* for women of the working class, and particularly for black and other immigrant women.

Overseas nurses: cheap labour

The number of overseas student nurses coming into the British Health Service increases rapidly each year. In 1959, approximately 6,000 came in; in 1970, just under 19,000. They come mainly from the Caribbean, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Malaysia (which is now the highest sending country) and Ireland. We cannot analyse in depth who these women are, and the specific conditions that exist in their own countries which force them to come to Britain for training as a way out. For a way out it certainly is. Few come with the desire to nurse. But whether the

Grace Jenkins, SEN, Trinidadian.

'I came to England to train as a nurse in 1970 when I was 22. I applied to the Trinidad Health Service and they sent me a list of hospital addresses in England. I chose one in Birmingham. I went for an interview in Trinidad and took a sort of intelligence test. I was accepted by the hospital. I came direct to the hospital. I didn't really want to nurse but I wanted to leave Trinidad. I have never had a job there.

I did eight weeks — training and then went straight on the ward working, that is, changing bed pans, cleaning lockers and generally fetching and carrying. At first I got £45 a month after deductions. It took me a week to realise that I didn't like England and not much longer to realise I didn't like nursing, but I have to stay five years; that is the condition under which I came.

From Birmingham I went to Nottingham to do a special Theatre training — it's more money once you are trained. I find nurses are very conscious of what position they hold — even some of the black ones.

When I was in Birmingham in 1970 they told two black trainee nurses that they would have to leave because they had failed three times a test you take after your eight weeks initial training. About 50 of us [black nurses] went on strike, some for half a day, some for two or three days, and demanded that they be re-instated. We got the help of the local West Indian Association and we got them back in. I'm doing Agency work now — during my holiday period. I need the money.'

desire is there or not, the National Health Service ensures that they will work here for at least five years. Many of them are deliberately directed to take the SEN qualification which is of no use to them outside of Britain, but which guarantees a trained, low paid workforce on the ward floor. One way of pushing women from overseas into SEN training is by demanding educational standards which overseas students are less likely to have.

During their stay here they have to renew their permits through the hospital every six months. They have also to give an undertaking that they will stay for a certain period of time after they have trained so that Britain can benefit from 'the training she has paid for'. Yet since most of her training is spent working on the ward, the SEN pupil nurse repays for her training a million times over by the cheap labour she provides. The NHS need for the labour as opposed to skilled labour is shown by the fact that in 1972 only 120 qualified nurses were allowed into the country.

* * *

Labour in the hospital is devised according to sex, race and age. Different jobs are done by people in different uniforms, getting different wages, and having different degrees of power. Those who work the hardest have the least status and the least wages. These divisions are further reinforced by the division between those who are 'professionals' and those who are not. 'The specific way this hierarchy functions, which is different from other waged work, is that every student nurse has a chance to be second year, and every second year a chance to be third year, and every third year a chance to be Staff Nurse and every Staff nurse the chance to be Ward Sister, and Ward Sisters become Matrons, and a few Matrons become...' ('Wages for Housework and the Struggle of the Nurses', Power of Women Collective).

There are two types of training from the beginning — a two-year course leads to an SEN (State Enrolled Nurse) qualification which cannot lead to promotion. A large number of Asians, Irish and West Indians are deliberately directed to SEN.

'When you are interviewed they ask you if you want to do the course in two years or three, and all of us said we would like to do the two-year course. It's only when you get here that you realise that if you do two years, you will be an SEN.'

The SRN (State Registered Nurse) goes through a three-year training and it is she who has the potential for promotion

On the ward floor black women are invariably to be seen in the lower trades, servicing doctors, 'professional' nurses, and patients. Few black nurses enter the National Health Service as a vocation, in the hope of becoming a matron — and to even those who do, it soon becomes clear that this is not what they have been recruited for. For black women, nursing is a *job*, nothing more, and by refusing to treat it as a vocation they are not only exposing the real nature of nursing in the health service, but are undermining the hierarchy which depends on them wanting to be a part of it.

General Nursing

SRN (3-year course)

Student Nurses' Training Allowances		Training Allowances	Lodging charge where resident
Aged under 21 on entry	Age 18	£816	£29.40
	Age 19	£891	£58.80
	Age 20	£936	£58.80
Aged 21 or over on entry	First year of training	£1,065	£120
	Second year of training	£1,098	£120
	Third year of training	£1,131	£120

(A single payment of £5 is made on passing the Preliminary or Intermediate qualifying examinations)

Qualified Nurses' Salary Scales		Salary Scales	Lodging charge where resident
Staff Nurse		£1,338—£1,725	£192
	Ward Sister/Charge Nurse	£1,632—£2,202	£225
	Nursing Officer		
Lower scale		£2,070—£2,523	£312
	Higher scale	£2,160—£2,610	£324
Senior Nursing Officer			
	Lower scale	£2,328—£2,814	£366
	Higher scale	£2,460—£2,949	£384
Principal Nursing Officer			
	Lowest scale	£2,667—£3,195	£402
	Highest scale	£3,222—£3,810	£501

Higher Salary Scales

are applicable to the senior nursing staff of Regional Health Authorities and Area Health Authorities

SEN (2-year course)

Pupil Nurses' Training Allowances		Training Allowances	Lodging charge where resident
Aged under 21 on entry	Age 18	£816	£29.40
	Age 19	£891	£58.80
	Age 20	£936	£58.80
Aged 21 or over on entry	First year of training	£1,065	£120
	Second year of training	£1,098	£120

(A single payment of £5 is made on completion of training after passing the test for Enrolment)

Qualified Nurses' Salary Scales		Salary Scales	Lodging charge where resident
Enrolled Nurse		£1,203—£1,455	£162
Senior Enrolled Nurse		£1,380—£1,755	£192

Unqualified Nursing Staff's Salary Scales		Salary Scales	Lodging charge where resident
Nursing Auxiliaries	Age 18	£816	£58.80
	Age 19	£855	£58.80
Age 20		£900	£58.80
	Age 21 or over	£1,053—£1,293	£120

'... Like the work handed down from the Nursing Officer, down to the Sister on the ward, then the charge nurse on the ward, then the SRN on the ward, down down to the student nurse, and that is the lowest grade apart from us [auxiliaries] and the workers who clean ...'

Mrs. Andrews, Nursing Assistant (psychiatric hospital equivalent of an auxiliary in a general hospital).

'But this is what I think was wrong from the beginning, by giving us the name of nursing assistant, this "nursing" — it shouldn't be, it should be workers To me it is just a job like any other, if I was in a factory or anything like that.

All of us have to do a lot of things they [nurses] do, except we don't give injections and write reports. We have to admit the patient, we have to make beds, take them to ECT treatment, we do everything they do . . . only they sit in the office. We are the ones outside with the patients all the time.

People ask me why I have stayed so long. Come December I will have been there for eight years. But I can defend myself. I know I am not liked by them and I can't really say that I want to hug and squeeze with them. I just want them to accept me as I am and I accept them as they are and do their work.

The majority of the staff are black here, they are mostly Nursing Assistants. For example, on the children's ward, I counted that they had 12 Nursing Assistants, two sisters, a Charge nurse [male equivalent of a sister] and a staff nurse and an SRN. All the Nursing Assistants were black. It's little things like that I check up on.

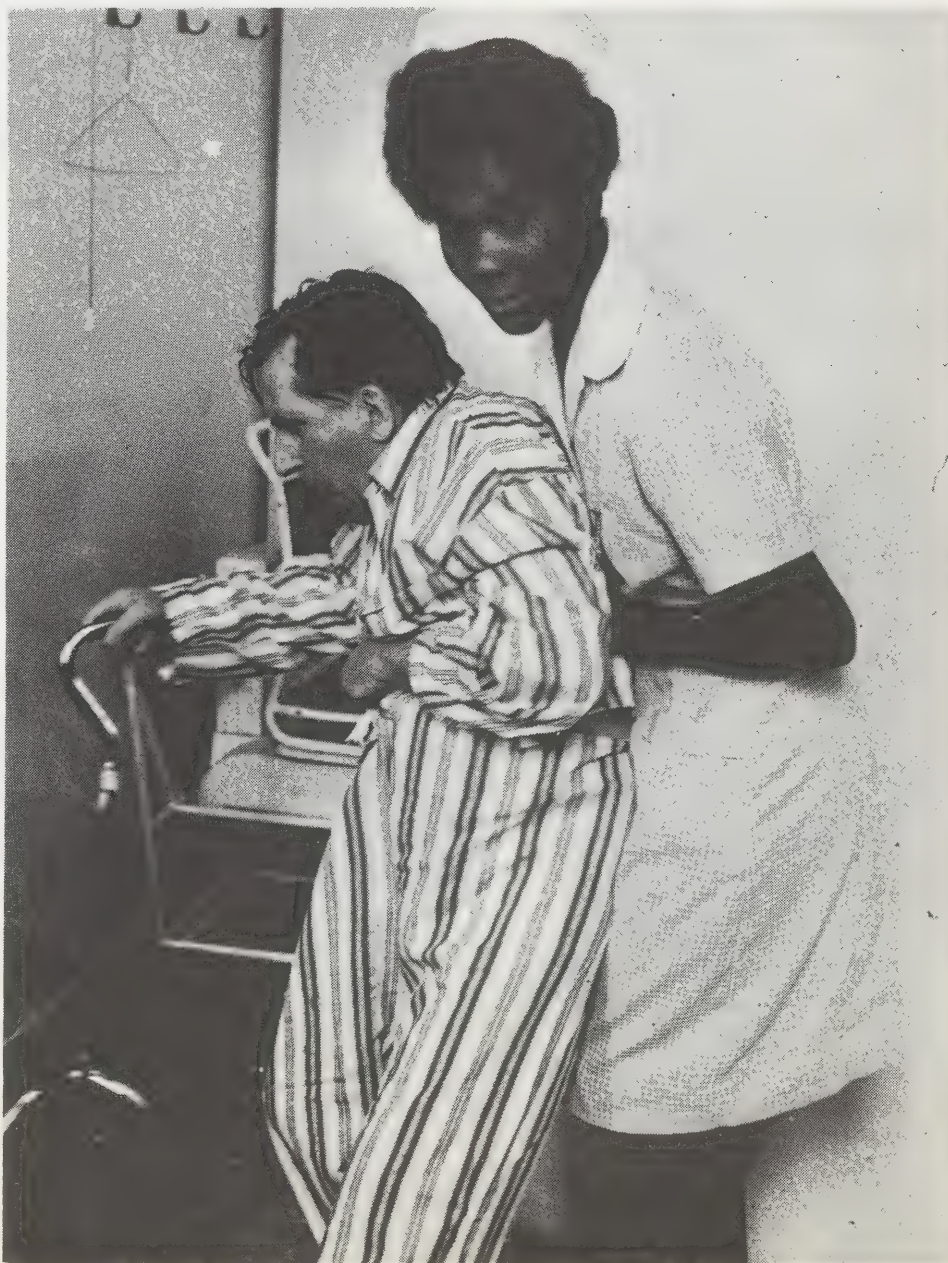
Some people ask me why I don't want to go further. I don't want to because I have fulfilled my goal by bringing up my two children on my own. I don't want any status behind my name because it is a whole bloody racket I can't see where they are going anyway, they have more heartaches than anything else. Just where I am is where I want to stay and I will be just on the outside looking in at them fighting. They don't have time for their husbands; it's just position, position. It doesn't help the patients recover, it's only themselves Now they have a new badge. When we were first there all they put on it was Nurse Andrews or Nurse Brown. On this new badge everybody has their status on it — T.T. Andrews, which is my name and this is causing some dispute from those who feel that their years of service mean they are more than just workers — and want recognition of it. I am pleased because once they see it they know exactly who I am and they can't ask me to do certain things and I can refuse to do a lot of things.'

Agency Nurses

We believe that the Agency nurse has represented the spearhead for the force for change in the National Health Service. The attempts to victimise her are racist and anti-working class.

A significant number of black nurses are doing agency work. Nursing agencies have mushroomed in the last two years, and more and more nurses, particularly those who are married, are doing Agency work as a flexible alternative to working in the health service. In the London area especially, the teaching hospitals rely heavily on agency supply easing their labour problems. For example, the last available figures from the DHSS show that on 30 September 1971, 'the equivalent of 2,720 agency nurses and midwives working the whole time were being employed in the area of central London and the four Metropolitan Regional Hospital Boards . . . 54% were employed in the teaching hospitals, which employed only 11% of NHS nursing and midwifery staff' (Brigg's Report on nursing, 1972).

The Agency nurse has been singled out and made a focus for attack. The attack has come from within the 'profession', from the union executive of COHSE, and from so-called revolutionary organisations. All have said that NHS nurses should refuse to work with Agency nurses. At the time of writing, COHSE has withdrawn use of the strike weapon by its members, pending the Halsbury Committee Report, but their ban on working with Agency nurses remains and is to become permanent. The National Rank & File Organising Committee, who produce *Hospital Worker*, have also called for a complete end to the use of Agency nurses, and a recent report in *Women's Voice*, paper of International Socialists Women, said: 'At our first meeting we decided that the best action would be to ban working with agency nurses. There's 300 in King's [Hospital] and £12,500 a week is



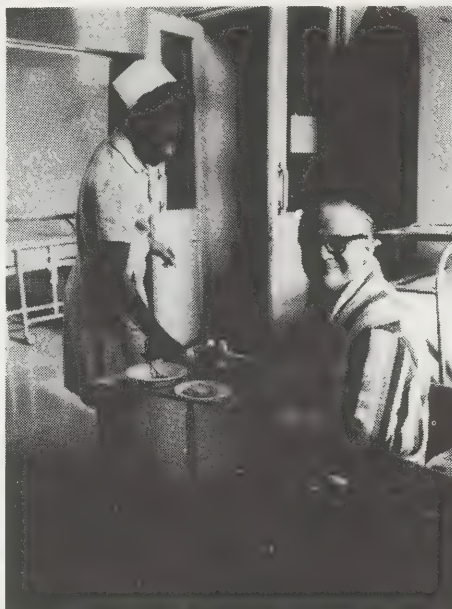
Serving and Cleaning — at home and at work.

RICHARD BRAINE

'I joined the Union COHSE since the strike for protection. I have been to two meetings, one at the Maudsley and the other at Bethlem, and the things Mr. Spanswick told us were different than from what he said on television. STRIKE he said to us, and when I saw him on the television I said look at that bitch, he was saying that he thinks that nurses are dedicated and that if they walk out on the patients they will lose their reputation. We haven't raised the question of discrimination because at the first meeting it was said that it wasn't a meeting for that, only for money.'

spent on them — the hospital would collapse without them. Of course it's hard on them, but if they're bothered about the state of nursing they should be in the NHS fighting with us.'

The reality is that the National Health Service wage rises with seniority, from grade to grade. If a nurse breaks her service, for example to have children, she loses all seniority and the wage that goes with it, and when she re-joins must begin over again working her way up the pay ladder. This kind of penalisation excludes almost all black nurses who are mothers from re-joining, because whether or not there is a man in the house, the woman must work. So they do Agency work more and more because that is their only choice. Furthermore, having children raises the question of child-care facilities which are not available on the scale needed and certainly not at a price black nurses could afford. So many work the night shift and see after the children and housework by day.



RICHARD BRAINE

'Caring is women's work' - especially black women's work

Patricia Mathews, SRN, Barbados:

'I came to this country in 1962 when I was 17. I went to look for a job and the Youth Employment Officers suggested that I go for a job in the factory. I didn't want to work in a factory — but I didn't know what I wanted to do — I didn't really want to do nursing as such. I went to a London Teaching Hospital to train as a nurse. They said I would have to work as an auxiliary first because of my age. I now know this isn't true; they could have taken me on as a cadet. So I worked as an auxiliary doing bed pans, washing babies' woollies, cleaning lockers, etc.

When I first started it was so depressing, I was one of the only black girls there. Then more and more black girls came into London and it wasn't so bad. I remember one incident. I was living at the nurses' home and at that time I was wearing clothes I had brought with me from home. As I was going out while living at the nursing home the matron said to me, 'where are you going dressed like a tart'? They used to do things like going through your clothes and then ask you how you could afford certain things, I remember that the first pay I got was £9 a week. In 1963 I started training for an SRN, and I felt so isolated, there would be times when I would sit in the canteen all by myself with no one to talk to. I was unhappy but I didn't want to work in a factory and my family and friends all felt nursing was better than that, so I stayed. It was during that period of my life that I saw I was being victimised. To me it has always just been a job. I trained because I couldn't see what else there was; now it is a way of earning a living. When I finished training and was on the wards the doctors especially wouldn't recognise black nurses then. Many is the time I was asked to fetch a nurse. But this has changed; they can't do without black nurses at all now.

In 1964 I qualified and left the Health Service immediately, and went to work for an agency. I will never work for the Health Service because of what I went through during my training. The patients are not being looked after properly — and the nurses have no say in the way the patients are looked after and the money is disgusting. Everyone on the ward is divided by what status they are. In the NHS you have to put up with things that as an Agency nurse you don't have to. Matron doesn't rule you any more. When I first started Agency work there were not many agencies around and in those days it was mostly private nursing that they catered for. Many times I have gone to a job and the person has said that they didn't want me to nurse them. If they were desperate they would say, oh, you could look after me today but I would like someone else tomorrow. I don't particularly like working for an Agency either but you get more money and more freedom. If my daughter is sick I just ring up and say I am not going in. Whereas in the Health Service they would try and persuade you to come in saying how short-staffed they were, and if you didn't you would lose a night's pay. But I do feel that they are making a big business out of us. You get different rates from different agencies and some take up to 12½% commission. I work nights all the time because I have a child. I chop and change agencies to get more money. I work 4 nights a week from 8.30 p.m. to 7.30 a.m. at a London hospital where the majority of nurses are from overseas. I find that whenever people talk about Agency nurses they mean black nurses, but there are nurses from all over the world working for Agencies. I feel very sorry now for the girls, say, from Philippines and Malaysia who don't speak English very well and who are being exploited. They remind me of when I first started training.'

The question of how much money the Agency nurse earns is wildly exaggerated and some Agencies operate a pay scale for white nurses and a lower one for black nurses. We were told: 'At the agency they said you were never to discuss your wages. I did and I discovered that Australian nurses were getting more.'

At critical points in struggle, when the interests of two different sets of workers seem to clash, the stronger often win their case temporarily by excluding the weaker. The trade unions were formed in Britain to exclude women from skilled trades. The trade unions in the US were formed to exclude white women, all 'foreigners' and blacks from skilled trades. The nursing work force *appears* to be divided by different unions and professional bodies, but they are not. In this case the divisions between unions need not divide workers, and may even be helpful since nurses are getting together across trade union barriers. Non-trade union workers (and that includes Agency nurses) are therefore not excluded by the workers' own way of organising. The divisions that are dangerous are between first, nursing and non-nursing staff, and second, NHS and agency nurses — divisions among hospital workers. They must come together and refuse these divisions that the government, unions and the Left are trying to deepen. Racism and sexism are not about abstract moral attitudes, but about whether you take position with black women, agency or non-agency, auxiliary, SRN or SEN.

The Agency nurse is the first refusal to be tied to the hospital hierarchy, thereby confronting the blackmail that faces all nurses, that they are caring 'professionals' and not workers. The issues which have created the Agency nurse are fundamental to all nurses and in fact to all women. But the unity necessary to make a fight will come only when NHS nurses join with Agency nurses to raise these issues.

Black nurses have been accused of not participating militantly in the present struggle. Such accusations like those against Agency nurses are based on the racism inherent in the hospital hierarchy. Black nurses cannot know if the unity for which white nurses are calling is any guarantee that their specific grievances will be dealt with. They, more than white nurses, face the indignities of the ward from patients and doctors, and the entire history and experience which they bring to nursing causes them to proceed with caution. The attack on the Agency nurse has confirmed that they have been right to be cautious so far about joining the struggle when they are not leading it.

For further information on the Black Womens Group contact 65 Railton Rd., Brixton S.W.2.

Mrs. D., who comes from Jamaica, started off as a nursing auxiliary and after some years trained as an SEN. She is now doing Agency work and explains why:

'Well, I wanted to go home on a holiday. I hadn't seen my mother for over 10 years. I went to the matron and asked her if I could have my five weeks holiday, plus three weeks without pay. She said "no", I would have to resign and then re-join. So I resigned . . . It's not that you have to start training again, but after you're qualified, each year you're a year up, and when you get to three years you're a Senior Enrolled Nurse and you get a higher pay than when you are first or second year. If you break your time before your three years are up you have to start back at Grade 1, which is what happened to me. I tried to re-join but I couldn't get in, so I decided to go to the agency . . . I don't know why I couldn't get back in — they're supposed to be short of nurses. I don't know if it was the reference or what . . . I work for Mrs. H. in Streatham — she doesn't pay top rates, but you can always get jobs as long as you want to work . . . I work the night shifts . . . It's not more money. You may get £2 or £3 more than on days, but for me it's much more convenient because . . . it suits me and fits in with my housework . . . I'm working now in Battersea. Most of the night staff are black. Night nurses are black because they have children and it's more convenient for them to be at home in the days to see after the children. If you work days you're not there to send them off to school, you're not there to receive them when they come back, and you have to get somebody to look after them. With nights, you can actually put them off to bed before going to work.'

I support the strike wholeheartedly. Nurses are saying they won't work with Agency nurses and I think they're being silly, because number one, they should find out why nurses have to go on the agency, because in my case it's not because I wanted to but because I was forced to . . . I can't do without working. If I could have got back into the hospital I would have because there is more security and there are periods with the agency when I can't get work at all, like in the winter when the nurses are not on holidays. If you are ill on the agency, you get no pay and no looking after.'

Marilyn came to England at the age of 16 from Trinidad. She has been nursing for 12 years, the last 5 of which have been spent working for Agencies. She says:

'I left school in Fulham when I was 18 years with no qualifications except CSE's, and I went straight to nursing. I had always wanted to be a nurse from home in the Caribbean, since I was young. There were four of us, three girls and one boy. The three of us were going to be nurses and the boy was going to be a doctor.'

I got £12 a month after they had deducted for board and lodging. After two years I got pregnant so I left. I went back to work 6 weeks after I had my child and I did a year of SEN . . . I really started agency work for 6 months only and because it's a job I can leave whenever I want to if I feel like leaving.

I've worked for about six agencies. The first one paid the same as the NHS so I didn't stay . . . I worked nights so I could be with my child in the day. That's why a lot of women work nights . . . I don't care really because I've had so many different experiences nursing, it has made me sick. Even if you have qualifications you have to work so hard to prove yourself as good as they [white nurses] are, or even better. It's not handed to you on a plate. With white nurses it's just handed to them. Black nurses get most of the dirty jobs. Say you have one white trained nurse and one black trained nurse on the ward, you will have the white one in the office and the black one on the ward. Doctors treat you terrible and the black ones are just as bad. They just completely ignore black nurses once there's a white nurse there. The last hospital I worked in there were more agency nurses than NHS nurses . . . There should be some arrangement by the hospital to provide nurseries. Some hospitals have creches but they're no use because you have to work odd hours. It might be open 9-5, but if you're working until 8 it's no good. Or they close on a Saturday or Sunday, so what happens then, or on a Bank holiday?'

CLASS AND NATIONALISM IN AFRICA

As we go to press the Sixth Pan African Congress in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, is in its final session. In the preparations leading up to the Congress, the organisers – TANU (the ruling party) and the temporary secretariat went along with Caribbean governments, particularly the Guyanese, who succeeded with their demands that Caribbean revolutionary activists be reduced to the status of observers.

Below we publish extracts from Walter Rodney's paper to the Congress in which he draws a line of steel between Pan Africanism, as espoused by the new black international technocracy, and revolutionary Pan-Africanism, i.e. the unity of Africa under socialist rule. In our next issue we will be carrying full reports from the Congress and the boycotts which followed the exclusion of Caribbean revolutionaries.

WALTER RODNEY, author of *Groundings with my Brothers* and *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, is a prominent Caribbean revolutionary intellectual.

Since the Fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester in 1945, the political geography of Africa has been transformed by the rise of some forty constitutionally independent political units presided over by Africans. This is to state the obvious. Yet, following in the wake of the great pageant of the regaining of political independence, there has come the recognition on the part of many that the struggle of the African people has intensified rather than abated, and that it is being expressed not merely as a contradiction between African producers and European capitalists but also as a conflict between the majority of the black working masses and a small African possessing class. This, admittedly, is to state the contentious; but the Sixth Pan-African Congress will surely have to walk the tight-rope of this point of contention.

Independence Movement

Pan-Africanism in the post-independence era is international in so far as it seeks the unity of peoples living in a large number of juridically independent states. But it is simultaneously a brand of nationalism; and one must therefore penetrate its nationalist form to appreciate its class content. This exercise is made easier by the fact that the nationalist movements in Africa which led to the regaining of independence in more than three dozen states constitute a phenomenon which has already received considerable attention. These movements were essentially political fronts or class alliances in which the grievances of all social groups were expressed as 'national' grievances against the colonisers. However, while the workers and peasants formed the overwhelming numerical majority, the leadership was almost exclusively petty bourgeois. Understandably, this leadership placed to the fore those 'national' aims which contributed most directly to the promotion of their own class interests; but they voiced sentiments which were historically progressive, partly because of their own confrontation with the colonialists and partly because of pressure from the masses. Pan-Africanism was one of these progressive sentiments, which served as a platform for that sector of the African or black petty bourgeois leadership which was most uncompromising in its struggle against colonialism at any given time during the colonial period.

Virtually all leaders of African independence movements paid at least lip service to the idea that regional freedom was only a step towards the freedom and unity of the whole continent; and the most advanced nationalists were usually the most explicit on the issue of Pan-African solidarity. Nkrumah and Kenyatta were both at Manchester; while Nyerere, Kaunda

and Mboya were the driving forces behind the Pan-African Movement for East and Central Africa (PAMECA). Within the Francophone sphere, several leaders took Pan-Africanist positions in one form or another.

Pan-African solidarity also manifested itself with regard to the war of independence in Algeria, an episode which united not merely North Africa but also helped forge alliances between progressive nationalists on both sides of the Sahara. Similarly, the rise of national liberation movements dedicated to achieving freedom by any means necessary served to underscore the reality of Pan-Africanism. All African leaders had to concede that freedom in Southern Africa was vital to guarantee the freedom of any given sort of Africa, and the test, in practice, showed that commitment was greatest in the case of the most forward-looking of the petty bourgeois regimes – Ghana (under Nkrumah), Egypt (under Nasser), Algeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Guinea.

Class Limitations

It would be unhistorical to deny the progressive character of the African petty bourgeoisie at a particular moment in time. Owing to the low level of development of the productive forces in colonised Africa, it fell to the lot of the small privileged educated group to give expression to a mass of grievances against racial discrimination, low wages, low prices for cash crops, colonial bureaucratic commandism, and the indignity of alien rule as such. But the petty bourgeoisie were reformers and not revolutionaries. Their class limitations were stamped upon the character of the independence which they negotiated with the colonial masters. In the very process of demanding constitutional independence, they reneged on a cardinal principle of Pan-Africanism: namely, the unity and indivisibility of the African continent.

The petty bourgeoisie of Asia, Africa and Latin America cannot be described as 'entrepreneurs', 'pioneers', 'captains of industry', 'robber barons' or in any of the other swashbuckling terms coined to glorify the primary accumulation of capital. Franz Fanon flays them unmercilessly but truthfully when he points to the shoddy, imitative, lack-lustre character of the African petty bourgeoisie. Their role in the international capitalist system has always been that of compradors. Their capital outlay might often be greater than that of a factory owner during the industrial revolution in England during the early 19th century, but in the present era of monopoly capitalism it suffices mainly for chicken-farms. In any event, most of the African petty bourgeoisie is not directly involved in economic

enterprise — their real sphere being the professions, the administration and the military/police hierarchy. They lack both the vision and the objective base to essay the leap towards continental unity.

Failure to Challenge Imperialism

A close scrutiny further reveals that the failure of the African ruling class to effect meaningful unity is not merely due to weakness. Recalling once more the dismantling process which took place in Francophone Africa at the time of negotiated independence, it can be seen that the pusillanimity of the African petty bourgeoisie in the face of the deliberate creation of non-viable dependent mini-states by France attests not merely to the strength of the colonisers but also to fear on the part of the presumptive African rulers that larger territorial units might have negated their narrow class welfare. Throughout the continent, none of the successful independence movements denied the basic validity of the boundaries created a few decades ago by imperialism. To have done so would have been to issue a challenge so profound as to rule out the preservation of petty bourgeois interests in a compromise 'independence' worked out in conjunction with international capital.

If the weakness of the present petty bourgeois leadership of Africa were the only problem, then they could be dismissed as passive bystanders who cannot make operational the potential of Pan-Africanism as an ideology of liberation. However, they maintain themselves as a class by fomenting internal divisions and by dependence on external capitalist powers. These policies are antithetical to Pan-Africanism. The record since independence confirms that the interests of the African petty bourgeoisie are as irreconcilable with genuine Pan-Africanism as Pan-Africanism is irreconcilable with the interests of international capitalism.

Most African mini-states are engaged in consolidating their territorial frontiers, in preserving the social relations prevailing inside these frontiers, and in protecting imperialism in the form of the monopolies and their respective states. The capitalist super-powers, directly and indirectly, individually and collectively, guarantee the existence of the African petty bourgeoisie as a ruling class and use them to penetrate and manipulate African society. This has been done so crudely and openly that one does not have to be specially informed or specially aware in order to perceive what has been going down.

Pan-Africanism has been so flouted by the present African regimes that the concept of 'Africa' is dead for all practical purposes such as travel and employment. The 'Africanisation' that was aimed against the European colonial administrator soon gave way to restrictive employment and immigration practices by Ivory Coast, Ghana (under Busia), Zaire, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and others — aimed against Dahomeans, Nigerians, Burundi nationals, Malawians, Kenyans and all Africans who were guilty of believing that Africa was for the Africans. Of course, it was said that unemployment among citizens of any given country forced the government to take such extreme steps. This is a pitiable excuse, which tries to hide the fact that unemployment is the responsibility of the neo-colonial regimes, which can do nothing better than preside over dependent economies with little growth and no development. In many respects, one African has been further shut off from another during the present neo-colonial phase than was the case during raw colonialism. Even within the context of the existing African nation states, the African ruling class has seldom sought to build anything other than tribal power bases, which means that they seek division and not unity at all levels of political activity, be it national, continental or international.

Socialism: the Enemy

It is not surprising that Socialism has been enemy number one for so many African states. African leaders fight the bogey of Communist threat rather than the reality of capitalist/

imperialist oppression. Even the more progressive of this ruling class harbour and protect local reactionaries while neutralising or eliminating Marxist and other left-wing elements. In ten, twelve or fifteen years of constitutional independence, the various parts of Africa have scored no victories in ending exploitation and inequality. On the contrary, social differentials have increased rapidly and the same applies to the amount of surplus extracted by foreign monopoly capital. In the spheres of production and technology, the so-called 'development decade' of the sixties offers the spectacle of decreasing agricultural production, a declining share of world trade, and the proliferation of dependency structures because of the further penetration of multi-national corporations. All of these matters are highly relevant to a discussion of Pan-Africanism.

The transformation of the African environment, the transformation of social and production relations, the break with imperialism and the forging of African political and economic unity are all dialectically inter-related. This complex of historical tasks can be carried out only under the banner of Socialism and through the leadership of the working classes. The African petty bourgeoisie as a ruling class use their state power against Socialist ideology, against the material interests of the working class, and against the political unity of the African masses.

Of course, the rhetoric of the African ruling class is something else. Only a Banda has the temerity to openly abuse the concept of African unity, and only a few others would openly espouse capitalism and imperialism as decent, and as just. Otherwise, the petty bourgeoisie prefers the technique of paying lip service to progressive ideas, seeking the defeat of these ideas through a process of trivialisation and vulgarisation. Both Socialism and Pan-Africanism are of the utmost importance with respect to this technique. In one sense, the unwillingness of the petty bourgeoisie to manifest overt hostility to Socialism and Pan-Africanism is a testimony to the development of mass consciousness and to the level of confrontation between progressive and reactionary forces on the world stage. But it is also very insidious in so far as pseudo-revolutionary positions tend to pre-empt genuinely revolutionary positions. For instance, the existing African regimes have helped create the illusion that the OAU represents the concretisation of Pan-African unity. The OAU is the principal instrument which legitimises the forty-odd mini-states visited upon us by colonialism.

Obfuscation of the notion of class in post-independence Africa has made Pan-Africanism a toothless slogan as far as imperialism is concerned, and it has actually been adopted by African chauvinists and reactionaries, marking a distinct departure from the earlier years of this century when the proponents of Pan-Africanism stood on the left flank of their respective national movements on both sides of the Atlantic. The recapture of the revolutionary initiative should clearly be one of the foremost tasks of the Sixth Pan-African Congress.

Pan-Africanism and the Caribbean

Although New World black representation predominated at all Pan-African Congresses and Conferences in the past, the agendas were usually devoted almost exclusively to the affairs of the African continent. It can be assumed that the Sixth Pan-African Congress will not be substantially different, but the creation of independent Caribbean nation states does introduce a new dimension with regard to the participation of this part of the black world. Having sketched the main outlines of the petty bourgeois position in Africa, it is unnecessary to elaborate on the Caribbean scene, because of the numerous and basic similarities. It is to be noted, however, that that which appears as tragedy against the vast backcloth of Africa re-appears as comedy in the Caribbean. Early this year, the people of the then colony of Grenada took to the streets to express in uncompromising terms their opposition to the exploitative and oppressive system of Anglo-American colonialism, which is manned locally by a certain petty bourgeois clique. At the same time, the British Government carried on

regardless in its plans to grant independence to the said petty bourgeois clique, expressing reservations only on the point of whether or not it was safe to send a member of the Royal Family to preside over the independence ceremony. As it was, militant striking workers deprived the independence celebrations of telephone services, port services and electricity, but the petty bourgeois regime managed to find some fireworks to mark the auspicious occasion. What term other than 'comedy' can describe such a situation?

The ruling class in each given British Caribbean territory usually takes pains to create a 'national' identity, which amounts to little more than glorifying the fact that some Africans were sent to slave plantations in Jamaica or Trinidad rather than Barbados or Antigua, as the case may be. On the basis of this 'nationalism', the petty bourgeoisie can continue the former British colonial policy of preventing trade unionists and progressives from moving freely amongst the people of the Caribbean. Another antic which is common on the part of the West Indian regimes is that they operate against (unarmed) national liberation movements inside the Caribbean while loudly proclaiming support of African liberation movements in Southern Africa. This latter posture, along with other pro-African rhetoric, was forced on several West Indian leaders because of popular sympathy for the African cause at the mass level. The posturing and the rhetoric are extremely useful on jaunts to Africa in their quest for class alliances with the African petty bourgeoisie itself.

Sixth Pan African Congress

Yet, the realities of state power have predetermined that when the Sixth Pan-African Congress meets in Dar es Salaam in June 1974 it will be attended mainly by spokesmen of African and Caribbean states which in so many ways represent the negation of Pan-Africanism. One immediate consequence of the rise of constitutionally independent African and West Indian states is that for the first time such a gathering will be held on African soil and will be sponsored, directed and attended mainly by black governments rather than by black intellectuals as such or by small black protest organisations, as was the case up to the Fifth Congress in Manchester. Already it is

CLR James, George Padmore, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah (L to R).

clear that states will be represented as states and that the OAU will play some role.

When a few individuals began to contemplate this Congress some three years ago, it was felt that it should be a coming together of black political movements, as distinct from governments. One school of thought envisaged that it would be a select conference of the most progressive elements in the black world. To a large extent, this was the significance of the All African People's Conference held in Accra in 1958. However, plans for a similar meeting in the 1970s would be hopelessly idealist. The African radicals of 1958 are by and large the incumbents in office today. The radicals of today lead at best an uncomfortable existence within African states, while some languish in prison or in exile. The present petty bourgeois regimes would look with disfavour at any organised programme which purported to be Pan-African without their sanction and participation.

None of the progressive African regimes, which are already isolated and exposed to internal and external reaction, would dare to host a Congress which brought together only those who aggressively urge a unity of the African working masses and the building of a Socialist society. Such a Congress would have to be held in a metropolitan centre, and would thus condemn itself to serve primarily as a forum for alienated intellectuals.

In the light of the above considerations, any African committed to freedom, Socialism and development would need to look long and hard at the political implications of participation in the Sixth Pan-African Congress. The purists might be tempted to eschew any association whatsoever; but revolutionary praxis demands that one should contend against class enemies in theory and in practice, by seizing every opportunity to utilise all of the contradictions within imperialism as a global system — in this instance, contradictions born of economic exploitation and racist oppression.



BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

Responses from Asian Workers

Sir,

I am a regular reader of *Race Today*. This magazine is true to its name.

In the July 1974 issue an article written by Mala Dhondy, 'The Strike at Imperial Typewriters', was remarkable. Mala correctly defined the local racial situation, 'National Front City'. I would like to add why this is so.

The local labour movement is right-wing. The trade union and the Labour Party never take any action (militant) to combat racialism. Quite the opposite. Two local Labour MPs (Mr. Tom Bradley and Mr. Grenville Janner), who represent the majority of the coloured people of Leicester, never took any trouble to oppose racialism publicly. (Mr. Grenville Janner champions the cause of bringing the Jews out of the Soviet Union.)

In the debate on the Ugandan Asians, the Tory opposition proposed a racist motion in the City Council meetings. The governing Labour Party outdid the Tory motion by an amendment. That was how the 'Keep Away from Leicester' advert came in the Ugandan news media. In an article, 'Will Labour Party Take Coloured Votes for Granted?', the Asian workers were encouraged to take active part in the trade union as soon as they enter into any employment to prevent the accumulation of grievances.

However, unexpected to the trade union establishment, we now see the emergence of the militancy of Asian youth when they face racialism.

Kewal Lehal

Sir,

I do not approve of many Asian workers' attitude who are not supporting the strike. By doing so they are not only blacklegging the strikers, but are also making a mockery of the whole of the Asian community. Those workers may be thinking that they would be more trusted by the management and may get some privileged treatment from the management. In fact, management will not trust them simply because if these workers are not faithful to the Asian community, they cannot be trusted by the management.

Workers of the Imperial Co. are fighting for all workers of this country and I would like to see not only the rest of the Asian workers supporting them but also the white workers should join them. By isolating those workers the rest of the workers, white and black alike, are doing great damage to the cause of working class masses. This point was consistently raised by me during our strike at E. Jaffe. Workers at Imperial Co. should continue the strike, they have the support of the great majority of working class peoples of this country.



National Front counter demonstrators at Imperial Typewriters

Trade unions have always complained that Asians do not join the union. Now when Asians join unions, they should learn to support them without discrimination.

Mushtaq Hussain

Sir,

It is thrilling to hear of the strike at Imperial Typewriters. I hope the strikers have requested their High Commissioners to exert pressure on the company abroad.

White workers not supporting the strike do so for the selfish reason of retaining their blue-eyed status. Blacklegging can only prolong the dispute and bring about a less favourable final settlement.

Some people say that a wife should not be working but minding her home and family. I say that she would not have to work if her husband was receiving enough money in the first place. This is the way the capitalist system acquires a larger labour pool.

An immigrant worker grabs the first job he can find. Later he realises that he was in fact grabbed by the employer. Asians, coming here with hopes of having escaped the slave-driver's whip in their countries of origin, will naturally resent unfair treatment wherever they work.

Any shop steward can be replaced after a vote of no confidence by the majority of those he represents.

The rule requiring two years service before one is allowed to be a shop steward can be changed by negotiation.

Procedural Agreements have been made to straight-jacket workers. I'd like to know of an agreement that management has not broken while legally exploiting his workforce.

The union appears to have let down its members. This is nothing new. Unions are always eager to enroll new members and at a later stage shamefully display their impotence. If the official's prime concern is his job not yours, then you are in trouble. The union policy is to blame, for paid officials are appointed, not elected, in the T&GWU.

It will be interesting to know what support the Indian Workers' Association or any other organisation gave the strikers.

If white workers are not prepared to do rough and dirty jobs on starvation

wages and coloured workers are beginning to open their eyes, I can visualise plans for a large number of short- and long-term contract workers from abroad who will be fooled into accepting these jobs, with a good conduct clause and repatriation as the strike deterrent.

The second-generation immigrant worker does not want to know what his parents have been through. All he knows is equality and fair play is what he will fight for — employers please note that if you are not prepared to provide equal opportunity in employment, you alone will be to blame for opening Pandora's Box.

All forward thinking workers should make sure that they have a dependable union organisation at their place of work. Too many workers have been caught up in industrial trouble or closures while their pants were down.

Mike Rodda

Sir,

Are trade unions racist? I really do not know the answer, but it will be self deception if I say I do not want to know the answer. Trade unionism and racialism are two contradictory conceptions. Yet events have proven that for certain reasons these two apparent contradictions can merge, thereby creating some very unpleasant circumstances. What are the after effects of this merger? Only time will tell. I pray and wish these after effects are not as bitter and harmful to the fabric of society as they look today and as some people wish them to be.

Trade unions on the whole have not been fair to Asian workers. It is not an over statement, but it has been proven over the years. Whenever Asian workers have raised their voice, trade union officials have let them down. They have pictured them as 'Asian workers', not as workers. They have judged their cause on the basis of their origin (skin).

The T&GWU's record in this respect is very sad. Take Mansfield Hosiery, Perivale Gutterman and now Imperial Typewriters. Why in all these three cases has the Union let them down? All these people are not subversive elements, certainly not. All these people are working-class people, and they consider themselves as a part of the

main trade union stream.

What have been the effects of these struggles (where they have been left on their own) on the Asian community and the working class? Time will tell, but as these incidents happen and leave bitter memories, their faith in 'trade unions' is dying day by day.

Future: An Asian trade union based on colour? No, it is not viable. It is not desirable and it is not advisable.

Solution: Come forward. Take part in trade union activities and get rid of 'racialists' through the proper and democratic way.

A.D. Khan

Sir,

I am writing a few lines about the conditions of Harwood Cash, Nottingham, while I was there. At the time I was there, there were about forty Asian workers. They were treated as animals, the foremen used to push, shout and abuse the coloured workers. Although the Asians were set on as machine operators, they were made to clean the machines and often the canteen. They were paid less money than the white workers, there were no night or weekend allowances, also there was no overtime allowance. After I had been there a few weeks, I soon found out there was discrimination.

I went to the Race Relations Board and I was told they would investigate. After one year's investigation the RRB decided there was no discrimination. All the Asian workers were disappointed. I think myself that the RRB was hopeless and helpless and wasted their time and ours.

I cannot see how anyone can decide whether or not there is discrimination when they do not look into the situation more thoroughly. I advise Asian workers that it is more to their benefit to sort out their dispute themselves rather than waste time with the Board.

I would not go to the RRB again.

Akram Hussain

Sir,

The article 'Pulling the Wool Over Their Eyes' in the July issue did not go far enough. The situation in our factory, Yorkshire Carpets, is that the workers have been divided by the trade union based in Halifax, and also by our shop steward who is Pakistani. However, from 56 workers on the day and night shifts, only 12 workers of the day shift and up to 10 workers of the night shift went back, of whom up to 4 were sacked. Therefore the factory has employed a new work force. Of the remaining 56 workers, some have found new jobs and others, like myself, are still looking for jobs. 35 women were involved in the strike, but only for one day. They went back to work while we remained on strike, but nothing was done for them. They are still working.

Mohammed Ayub

Support From Women's Movement

Sir,

The events surrounding the strike at Imperial arouse tense excitement. For the strikers themselves, who see their future hanging on the outcome and who have to face the company and the union, the police and the racist community everyday — that's a high kind of tension. For *Race Today* the tension must come from the challenge contained in taking the responsibility of coordinating backing for the strike, which I read about in today's *Guardian* and *Times*. Even to attempt this integration of journalism with participation is a revolutionary undertaking.

We women can understand and appreciate those feelings, at the same time that we experience our own special excitement about the strike. Marx said the revolution comes like a thief in the night; who would have thought that at this historical moment it would be our Asian sisters who would be in the vanguard of women's struggles, who would be overcoming all the cultural conditioning that attempts to make them invisible? Who would have thought it? Even though the existence of a women's movement may be a factor in their own assertion of needs and rights, we movement women didn't think it.

Knowing it now makes an occasion for mutual recognition, as well as for giving the £40 we collected for the strikers at the National Women's Liberation Conference in Edinburgh on Sunday last. The following resolution was passed there: 'This National Women's Conference gives every support to the striking women and men of Imperial Typewriters, Leicester, and demands that the back-pay which has been stolen from the women be given to them, that they have paid tea-breaks and time to go to the toilet and that they have equal pay with men workers.' But more than resolutions — along with *Race*

Today we women should offer the Imperial women bodily support in picketing, fundraising, and publicity making. I, for one, do so.

Priscilla Allen

We Women Never Clock Out

Sir,

One woman striker interviewed in last month's article on the Imperial Typewriters strike gave the schedule typical of millions of women. She is considered part time, but in outlining her day in the home and at Imperial, she shows she has a 15-hour day, six for Imperial officially, for which she gets a wage that she is now on strike to raise, and nine for capital in general, including Imperial, for which nobody pays her anything. We women want our working day reduced in the home and out. We want a wage for every hour, for every minute, we work. They go together: the more we demand pay for all our work, the more they will be forced to lower our working day. Wages for housework is the only way to de-institutionalise us from 'women's work', that is, from capitalist work. What is strange to some of us is that when the working class describes 'with full knowledge the misfortunes from which they suffer,' the left/liberal Establishment is deaf in both ears.

Power to the sisters and brothers at Imperial! Once again workers are measuring the size of the wage and the length of the working day and rejecting both.

Some women from the Power of Women Collective

Next month's Backlash will focus around the article on Black Nurses. There will also be a debate on Walter Rodney's contribution on the Pan African Congress, and the 'Asian Workers' In Struggle' debate will continue. The magazine welcomes your contribution.



Picketing during the Perivale Gutterman Strike

BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

More on Litton Industries

Sir,

In the last issue of *Race Today*, you examined the financial background of Imperial Typewriters, and pointed out how, over the last five years, despite the doubling of the work-force and the trebling of the output, the company claims that it makes a spectacular loss, thus absolving it of the need to pay any tax to the Inland Revenue. You explained that out of a turnover of a total value of just over £10m, £6.4m was exported, and of this, £4.6m was exported to other companies within the group. Imperial Typewriters is owned by Litton International, the American-based company with 1,660 subsidiaries within the group. Since that was written, I have come up with new material, much of it drawn from a lengthy article on Litton in the American radical magazine *Ramparts*, which shows that Litton is no stranger to the gentle art of cooking the books. And while you speculated that in the particular case of Imperial, the profit was moving out of Britain to show up in some other country where tax rates were more favourable, I now have material which firmly locates Litton in the middle of the military/industrial complex with a penchant for dealing with the colonels, whether of the Pentagon variety, or the Greek home-grown variety.

In 1953, Litton Industries was a small laboratory production office specialising in electronics. Charles V. Litton, the owner had suffered from a family tragedy and sold the firm to one Tex Thornton. Thornton had had a brilliant war (2nd World War) after graduating from business college: under the patronage of Wall Street banker and assistant Secretary for War Robert Lovett, he became one of the youngest full colonels in the US Army. Despite the fact that he never left his desk job, he received a Legion of Merit, a Commendation Ribbon and two oak leaf clusters. Then he sold himself and a group of subordinates as a package to Ford: amongst those subordinates was Robert MacNamara, who was later to become, on Lovett's recommendation, Secretary of Defence, mainly responsible for the escalation of the war in Vietnam, and for much of the strategic hardware needed for that.

But Thornton and Ford fell out, and in 1948, under the patronage of two old army friends on the board, Thornton joined Hughes Aircraft. As Assistant General Manager, Thornton built up

Hughes Aircraft turnover from \$2m in 1948 to \$200m by 1953, mainly on the basis of the aircraft needed for the Korean war and a unique new fire control system patented by Hughes and bought by the Department of Defence through Thornton's old buddies. During that period, Thornton encouraged the company accountants to falsify the affidavits submitted to the government on costs. He also employed clerks in the evenings and at the weekends to fill in thousands of phoney purchasing forms claiming millions of dollars from government funds. News of these indiscretions could not be hushed up for long. Hughes sacked Thornton and ended up paying back \$43m dollars to the Treasury.

Coincidentally, a major dispute at Hughes plant meant that Thornton was able to move out with some of the top talent into the new company he had purchased - Litton Industries. Over the next four years, Litton grew from \$3m annual sales to over \$100m, most of it from the take over of other companies. Using the techniques of 'creative accounting', borrowing money from here, interest-free loans from state contracts there, Thornton set the pattern for future growth into a multi-national conglomerate.

Above all, there was the free-spending US military which was locked firmly into Litton's through Thornton's contacts with his war-time buddies. The bevy of generals and admirals on his board of directors, particularly the contacts with MacNamara, ensured a succession of lucrative contracts, some of which were never delivered, but all of which were paid for. And the no-risk, no speculative capital approach embodied in the 'costs plus profits' formula ensured that Litton grew throughout the '60s until the Vietnam war provided the real point of take-off.

One example suffices to show the technique: Litton won a contract from the Army to build an electronic navigator worth \$214,902. Using a wooden mock-up model, they toured major aircraft builders with their army idea until they secured a contract from Grumman Aircraft for rather more than \$10m. The army never got their navigator, nor did they get their money back. And Littons were the company, again using their military contacts, who designed the navigation systems for the infamous Starfighter aircraft, with which the Luftwaffe had 83 crashes and lost 42 pilots. That system had to be taken out of the aircraft, but the manufacture of it, in Germany, gave Littons a foothold into another section of the European econo-

my. They bought the German typewriter firms of Triumph and Adler.

Litton Industry in the work done for the US Navy has mammoth shipyards in Mississippi where they formed the practice of excluding black workers from the skilled and high paying jobs, while paying lip service to the idea of equal opportunity.

Military spending is not the only source of profit: three weeks after the coup in Greece, Litton was the first international firm to move in. As usual, the basis was costs plus - this time on capital raised internationally with no risk to Litton, with 11% profit margin for them: the basis of their investment was tourism. As the deal with Greece went through, Litton International started to negotiate for Imperial and pulled it off at a highly advantageous price to itself. Other enquiries were made in Indonesia, Portugal, Turkey, Taiwan, Nicaragua and Singapore. Deals were finalised in most of these to supply spare parts and components, produced by cheap labour under military regimes, for assembly in Europe and the States.

The other sphere of activity in the 'under developed' world in which Litton has pushed ahead lay on its own door step. The ghettos of America itself were ripe for Littons systems approach to the problems of capitalism. They subcontract from the Office of Economic Opportunity an entire Poverty Programme based around their Job Corps Centre on a barbed-wire-enclosed disused Navy Base in California. Here, with the aid of \$25.5m in grants from the state, they enroll young blacks from the cities in a draconian regime mainly geared to getting them out of the camp and into the army. As part of the education programme, they use text books published by their own companies, Van Nostrand and American Book Publishing, and spend much of the budget on books that are never read but which are highly profitable. In addition, they have a series of colleges, supported out of state funds, which are prime markets for their own educational division. And from this development on state funds, they are able to market entire educational systems to cities and states, another profitable section with easy access through their interlocking directorships of politicians, military men and academics.

Littons rank 44th in the *Fortune* list of blue chip companies: they are little different from the other 100 in that list of multi-nationals, to whom the world is simply a series of markets, materials and labour. To the workers of Imperial Typewriters in Leicester the question of bonus rate and discrimination was immediate and of prime concern. To Litton Industries they are simply figures on a map measured in billions of dollars. Whether they are screwing the American tax payer, the British tax payer or the Asian workers, it's all the same thing to them.

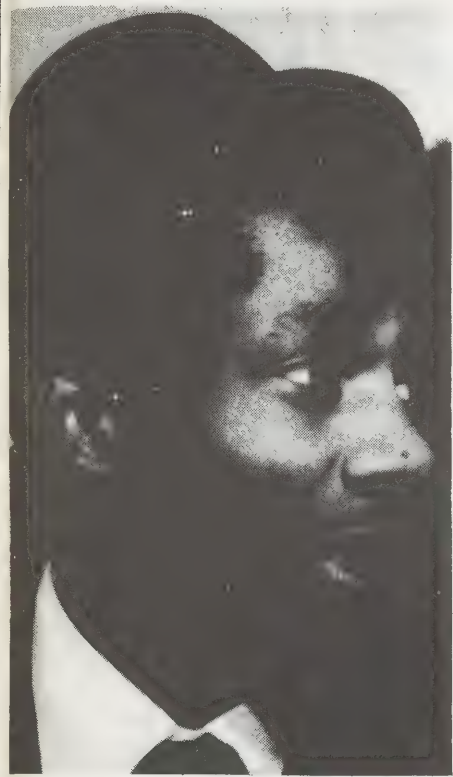
Larry O'Brien

Imperial
Typewriter Co. Ltd

REVIEWS

Brockwell Park

For
Robin Sterling,
Lloyd James,
Horace Parkinson
and
their parents



*Flowers wither quickly
everywhere in Brockwell Park,
like the fretful dreams
of the waiting mothers
who seem quietly doubtful
of the hourly survival
of their unprotected sons
at the bottom of the economic mountain.*

Not to care is to open
the door to the killer;
the wind in the Park
slices like wire.

*Look at the rewards
we've been driven to
by that other hill country,
back across the sea,
where the water is warm
at six in the morning,
when hire-purchase high life
blazes all along the foothills
like exclusive torches!*

Not to care is to open
the door to the killer;
the wind in the Park
slices like wire.

*Where were we, that day,
when the theft took place,
when the women lost their sons,
when their dreams exploded
in their unsuspecting faces,
when the law cornered the lambs
and the long-term slaughter began?*

Not to care is to open
the door to the killer;
the wind in the Park
slices like wire.

—Andrew Salkey
June 1974



'Let's Be Fair'

Black Migrants: White Natives
Daniel Lawrence
Cambridge University Press, £4.60
(hardback), £1.50 (paperback).

The advert for Mr. Lawrence's book in the July edition of *Race Today* suggests that he is going to rip apart the myth of harmonious race relations in Nottingham. The reality is that the book is a deal more muted than that. Most of the book is given over to a critical evaluation of previous research done on Nottingham. His own appraisal 'comes nearer to the evaluations' of the more critical researchers, such as Katznelson and Hiro, than the straightforward apologists. He then claims that his own conclusions have been derived from 'a closer as well as more systematic acquaintance with the situation than any of those that have been previously mentioned.' If he means that he lives in Nottingham and the others don't, then he is on firm ground.

Mr. Lawrence's original research mainly consists of a survey of 150 streets

within the old Central Nottingham Constituency. Some of the information collected is of interest, such as the greater enthusiasm for union membership shown by the black respondents, which contrasts with the opinions held by a number of local trade union officials. However, a lot of it is stating the obvious in that curious dialect so beloved of sociologists. We find (p. 74) that most immigrants tend to live in poor, inner-city housing. They are badly paid (p. 111): 'Coloured immigrants tend to be employed in unattractive jobs for which it is difficult to recruit white native labour.' He gives frank, fearless and adult replies to the question as to what will happen in the event of heavy unemployment (p. 127): 'It is not possible to predict just what effect such a deteriorating economic situation will have on race relations. Much will depend upon the precise character of the changes that occur. But there can be little doubt that racial distinctions will appear more salient than in a stable or improving situation.'

Mr. Lawrence does not attempt to whitewash the discrimination against blacks that occurs but at times his boasted local knowledge is a trifle sket-

chy. We are told (p. 6) that no candidates for local or parliamentary elections have tried to exploit the racial issue for electoral gain. Leaving aside the recent NF candidates, since the book seems to have been written a year or so ago (the strike at Mansfield Hosiery Mills appears virtually as a stop press item), this is, unfortunately, not true. Some of the Tory councillors associated with the Monday Club did attempt to play the racial card in the 1970 period. They were not very successful because anti-democratic 'red scum' smashed their meetings. And rubbing shoulders with these Powellite elements was Norman Fowler, subsequently Tory member for South Nottingham.

One of the crucial weaknesses of Mr. Lawrence's book is that it fails totally to understand why Nottingham got an undeserved reputation for fair treatment of its black inhabitants. This comes out clearest in the longest chapter in the book dealing with local race relations organisations. Lawrence attacks what he considers to be the unduly critical approach of Katznelson to the Community Relations Council (set up in 1954 as the Commonwealth Citizens Consultative Committee). He comments: 'It can be agreed that it

has not pressed the claims of the immigrant population with particular vigour. But neither has it had much impeding effect on the development of immigrant protest.' This misses the point. Nottingham is a town that had a race riot, used to have a de facto colour bar at one of its largest factories (Raleigh), possessed a police force that was alleged, at the drug planting trial, to employ pimps and pushers to spy on the West Indian community, and, more recently, has super-exploited Asian workers who had, at Crepe Sizes, to work a standard 84 hour week.

What also happened, and this is what bemuses the race relations 'experts', is that moderate community leaders were carefully fostered. A West Indian, the leader of the middle class Colonial Club, was made the full-time Organiser for Work Amongst the Coloured Communities. He was probably the first black JP in Britain and was joined on the Nottingham bench by a number of other moderate and reasonable blacks. And it was the Consultative Committee that was the hot-house used to nurture these fragile blooms. But did the Committee, then Council, and its old boy network have 'much of an impeding effect on the development of immigration protest'?

Leaving aside the difficulty of quantifying the term 'much', it has to be said that they did their best. Eric Irons JP could always be relied upon to attack the militants within the West Indian community and to issue reports on race relations that were characterised, as Lawrence himself appears to accept, by their supreme complacency. One of his fellow JPs made strenuous, but not very successful, efforts to stop Pakistani workers at strikes at Jones-Stroud, Crepe-Sizes and E. Jaffe from learning any political lessons from their struggles. The CRC have attempted to white wash the discrimination that occurred at Harwood Cash Lawn Mills. The act of the Imperial Typewriters strikers in snubbing the race relations industry shows that they are not succeeding. But let's be fair. They did try.

J. Atkinson

Pawn not Partner

Malawi - Foreign Policy and Development
Carolyn McMaster

Julian Friedmann Publishers. London,
£4.25.

Malawi is wedged between white dominated Southern Africa and the independent African states. Landlocked, with very few mineral resources and a negligible manufacturing sector, she is, economically, one of the most backward states, being dependent on Portuguese Mozambique, Rhodesia and South Africa for many facilities.

The range of foreign policy options open to such a state, the author argues, stems in part from this geopolitical position, in part from the promotion of domestic policy. Both, in turn, were moulded by Dr. Hastings Banda, Malawi's patriarchal ruler, with his singular background and predilections.

During the Scramble for Africa, Nyasaland, as Malawi was then called, became a British Protectorate in 1891. Her boundaries were simply laid down to suit the needs of rival imperial powers, with scant regard for the ethnic composition and economic needs of the people. That her economy, like those of other Central and East African colonies, was studiously neglected so that the people were of set purpose forced to become cheap migrant labour for the British owned gold mines in South Africa is an important feature of colonialism. McMaster does not stress this sufficiently. A hut tax was imposed as early as 1900 to prompt Nyasa men to seek work in the mines and on the farms of South Africa and Rhodesia.

The Central African Federation was set up in 1953. It gave the whites of Southern Rhodesia economic preferences and the opportunity to practise race discrimination against Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the two other members of the Federation. The able young leaders in the Nyasaland African Congress, called the Malawi Congress Party in 1959, strove to smash the Federation and attain political independence. To rouse the people who had not yet entered modern political life, they felt the political struggle needed 'a kind of hero to be hero-worshipped'. Banda was called upon to lead them. He returned to his country in 1958, having been away for forty years, studying medicine in the US, then in Edinburgh, after which he became a member of the staid British Medical Association and an elder of the Presbyterian kirk. This long association, outside his country, with conservative bodies, the book suggests, made him what he is: an admirer of the British monarchy, of British statecraft and tradition, a firm believer in constituted authority.

He proceeded to smash the Federation. In the eyes of his people he was the messiah. With the aid of Britain and expatriate skills he achieved self-government in 1963; independence came a year later. He quickly got rid of his lieutenants when they espoused the ideals of the OAU: African unity, the boycott of South Africa, active support for the Southern African liberation movements.

Instead, he retained and extended the client relationship Malawi traditionally had with South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. In his view the economy could not function otherwise. What is more, he warned that in taking a militant stance Malawi would become an easy target for military

attacks from the settler governments on his borders.

The absence of local industries to provide employment; the large subsistence portion of agriculture; the dependence of Malawi on the rail link through Mozambique to the sea, on Rhodesia for coal, on the migrants for family incomes and government revenue; the fear that the stoppage of migrants going to South Africa and Rhodesia would cause mass unemployment and political upheavals at home — these were the domestic factors which dominated Banda's thinking. Today, with a population of 4,500,000, Malawi has 200,000 migrant workers in Rhodesia and South Africa.

That Banda deemed it fit to develop close relations with the white regimes does not mean he has 'sold out' and become a 'traitor' to Africa. His class interests as an imperialist backer and penchant for European knowledge and expertise were always exhibited. His programme never extended beyond the abolition of the Federation and the attainment of independence with the active political and financial support of Britain, his spiritual home. A diehard conservative, he was determined to combat 'communism', in its liberal or more radical guise, and even do so with the co-operation of the Vorster regime. Which groups in Malawi compose the social props of his rule?

He articulates, to begin with, the interests of the rising agricultural middle class of which the European plantation owners form a significant segment. This class provided the impulse to find markets in South Africa, Rhodesia and overseas for its goods. Consequently, an integrated transport system with the white-dominated South has been forged, including closer rail links with Mozambique to gain freer access to the sea.

In return for migrant labour and agricultural goods to the settler regimes, Banda secures loans, industrial goods, investments and the expertise from South Africa to build up his country's manufacturing sector. This cannot be called 'development', as the author assumes, because the trade relations are so unequal that Malawi is placed in pawn to South Africa and Britain, suffering from mounting debts, a worsening trade deficit, inflation and thus a decline in the living standards of the Malawi people generally. Besides, the country is looted by foreign companies of its few natural resources, while the growth in manufacturing is limited to the processing of raw materials and handicrafts. Instead of development, we have here perverse growth or 'the development of underdevelopment' which the country cannot overcome while it remains within the imperialist framework.

Secondly, Banda opposed the Africanisation of the administration, retaining a large stratum of white expatriates in key positions in the State bureaucracy. Banda

has been extremely receptive to their advocacy of forging closer links with South Africa at all levels, including the military level. Thirdly, as a counterweight to the smouldering discontent of the radical and educated young Malawi nationalists, who want to replace the expatriates and bring the country into line with OAU policies, Banda has clothed the tribal chiefs with formidable powers.

Britain is Malawi's chief trading partner and source of foreign aid. The author suggests that Banda need not have entered into such a close relationship with South

Africa, because he did have the option of relying on other western powers instead. It is possible. Still, the question is of no practical significance, being often raised by liberal academics who see apartheid as divorced from and anathema to western imperialism, and South Africa as an autonomous entity, somehow in conflict with international capitalist relationships.

In point of fact, South Africa is the focus of about half of all imperialist investments in Africa and used as a western base to control the economies of the

African states. Apartheid is the tool of imperialism in Sub-Saharan Africa. Western multinational corporations, based in South Africa, channel their capital and goods to the north. Moreover, the general trend is towards the internationalisation of capital. Consequently, South African state and private capital is coalescing with imperialist capital which props up the apartheid system as an appendage and junior member of the western system.

Ken Jordaan

DOCK BRIEF

Our Leeds correspondent writes:

Tony Browne is a 16-year-old black youth who lives in the Hyde Park area of Leeds. He left school at Easter and was working as a decorator. Until the time of the following events he had never been involved with the police or had any previous convictions whatsoever.

In the late afternoon on 25 February 1974, Tony was being escorted from Ireland Wood Police Station by his mother, who had come to collect him after he had been arrested and accused of taking a bottle of milk from a doorstep. The police said they were satisfied that he wasn't responsible for taking the milk, in fact they had found the right person, who was charged and later brought to court.

According to Mrs. Browne, as Tony was leaving the station with her, he identified two police officers whom he said had assaulted him whilst in custody. One of the policemen overheard him, called him back, and said that he had changed his mind. Tony was charged with taking the milk. He was brought to court next day and sent to Whinmoor Remand Centre. He was not granted bail until 27 March.

Meanwhile, other charges were added, including burglary, taking cars and indecent assault. At this point Mrs. Browne began seeking help and advice in the community, for events seemed to be overtaking her very rapidly. In addition, Tony had told her that he had been assaulted by members of the staff at Whinmoor.

The tension eased when Tony was given bail, but three weeks later, on 20 April, he was again arrested. He had arrived home from shopping shortly after midday with his mother. Immediately, two police officers arrived and charged him with robbery at a shop, supposed to have taken place a few minutes before. (Later Tony was to be acquitted of this charge.) He was taken into custody and sent back to Whinmoor.

Tony appeared in court on 22 April, bail was refused and he was sent to Thorpe Arch Remand Centre where he was to remain until he was finally given bail on 6 May.

The first of the charges, heard on 22 May, was the alleged robbery of a shop on Brudenell Grove, Hyde Park, on 18 February 1974. Tony pleaded not guilty.

A white youth, Paul, who was charged with Tony, pleaded guilty and testified that Tony had done the shop with him. Paul was given a discharge. Also giving evidence against Tony were two small girls and the grandmother of one of them. In the middle of the trial Tony's barrister asked for an adjournment and Tony was persuaded to change his plea to guilty. Then, as he was waiting to go back into court, Tony was 'arrested'. The police, unknown to anyone, had arranged an 'identity parade'. The reason, they said, for the arrest was that a woman who had been sitting outside the juvenile court had identified Tony as the person who had robbed her of her purse on 9 May 1974. Tony's mother, barrister and solicitor's clerk, who were present at the time, did not see the woman. The police said she just happened to come to court that day to see if she could recognise her attacker. (Tony was about the only black youth in or around the court that day.)

Concerning the robbery of the shop, Tony was found guilty. His sentence was deferred and he was sent back to Whinmoor.

The two small girls who gave evidence in the case are neighbours of the Brownes. Later, while they were playing, one of them (Gail) apparently said to one of Tony's sisters that she was sorry for what she'd done to Tony, but she had lied because her mother had needed a new coat.

On 6 June Tony was found guilty of taking a Ford Cortina. He pleaded not guilty. A boy who testified against Tony had previously pleaded guilty to the same charge and had been given a discharge. After the verdict on Tony, his solicitors asked that the boy should be sent to Thorpe Arch on remand, instead of Whinmoor, because Whinmoor was being investigated in connection with charges that Tony had brought against them under the Race Relations Act. The solicitor thought to send Tony there would put him in an intolerable position. In answer to this the magistrate ruled that he would be sent to Thorpe Arch 'because he was unruly'.

Two weeks earlier, 23 May 1974, when Tony was up in court for renewal of custody, his elder brother Desmond, a law student, with no previous convictions, was pushed and assaulted by a Mr. Thac-

kery, who is employed by the social service department as an escort officer between Whinmoor and the Juvenile Court. (He also spends some time at Whinmoor helping the staff.) Desmond, in defending himself, was charged with assaulting Thackery, and so was Tony, although he was not in fact involved. (This case has still to be heard.) Allegedly, on the way back to Whinmoor that night, the van carrying Tony was stopped and he was beaten up. Thackery has now resigned from his post.

On 12 June Tony's hearing was adjourned for a week. On 19 June he was acquitted of the robbery of the shop of 20 April. The next day he and another black youth, Emmanuel George, were up on a charge of indecent assault (said to have occurred on 24 February 1974). George was acquitted but Tony was found guilty. The stipendiary magistrate conducting this case sentenced Tony to 3 months' detention on 21 June for this case and the other charges where Tony had been found guilty. (All the other juvenile cases against him have been adjourned sine die.)

Up to this point, the original charge about taking the bottle of milk, has never been mentioned, not even among those charges to be taken into consideration (which included taking another car and a robbery of over £300 worth of goods).

On 23 June Mrs. Browne had not yet been told where Tony had been sent. After about 50 phone calls he was finally located at Whaddon Detention Centre near Nottingham.

Recent reports have acclaimed Leeds police as one of the most successful police forces in Britain as far as solving crime is concerned. The reason may be evident in the case of Tony Browne. The method used was that of 'pick your man and clear the books'. And what is a more fitting place than the Juvenile Court, where so-called 'identification parades' which are not parades at all, take place in the corridor of the court, unknown to anyone except the police; where all proceedings are behind closed doors and there is strict censoring of anyone who tries to enter as an observer; and where the evidence, and in fact the case, is not known until the prosecution presents it during the hearing.

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LETTERS

Sir,

Mr. Atkinson's ill-tempered and highly selective review of my book (*Black Migrants: White Natives. A Study of Race Relations in Nottingham*; see August, *Race Today*) hardly warrants a reasoned reply. However, I would appreciate space in which to correct some of the more blatant of his misrepresentations. For example:

1. My book quite properly contains evaluations of previous research on Nottingham, but it is simply untrue to say that 'most of the book is given over to a critical evaluation of previous research'.

2. Mr. Atkinson states: 'Lawrence attacks what he considers to be the unduly critical approach of Katznelson to the Community Relations Council.' In fact, my objection to Katznelson's analysis is not that he is critical of the CRC — indeed my own book is very critical of the Council's work. What I argue is that whilst 'Katznelson's study contains many valuable insights and much of what he writes of the events in Nottingham is indisputable . . . he presents an unjustifiably neat portrayal of them and that this, coupled with a number of omissions and factual errors, causes him to draw a significantly distorted picture of the situation'. Unlike Katznelson (and others) I do not consider that the CRC has made much impact on the city's race relations one way or the other. So far as I can judge, it has attracted far more attention from its friends and foes than its real significance deserves.

3. Mr. Atkinson claims that I 'fail totally to understand why Nottingham got an undeserved reputation for fair treatment of its black inhabitants'. Unfortunately, he does not make it clear why he holds this view. His own position seems to be that it is mainly attributable to the role played by 'those moderate community leaders' who have been closely associated with the CRC. Obviously this is a crucial factor — but since it is one of those mentioned (several times) in my book, I 'fail totally to understand' why he refers to it as something which 'bemuses race relations experts'.

4. He objects that my assertion that the Community Relations Council has not had much of an impeding effect on the development of immigrant protest 'misses the point'. So far as I can judge, what he believes matters most is that those 'moderate community leaders fostered by the CRC' did try to achieve this end. Yet I draw attention to the complacent portrayal of the racial situation by the West

Indian Organizer for Work amongst the Coloured Communities (as Atkinson grudgingly concedes) and I also discuss at length his attempts (and those of other members of the CRC) to depoliticize the city's race relations. Since it is indisputable that there have been attempts to depoliticize race relations in Nottingham I could not have done otherwise. But what is in dispute are the motives of those involved and the extent of their success. Contrary to Katznelson's appraisal of the situation, I believe that the CRC has not done much to muffle immigrant protest — however much, and for whatever reason, some of its members have tried. Immigrant protest has, of course, been muffled and I note some of the possible causes in the book. What I suggest is that not much of the muffling has been due to the efforts of the CRC.

I can only hope that other subscribers to *Race Today* will read my book more carefully than Mr. Atkinson before making their evaluations of it.

Daniel Lawrence
Department of Sociology
Nottingham University

Sir,

I am delighted that you have not changed your editorial policy of being interested in worldwide news on black affairs. It seemed to me that since your new policy reflected a new focus on justice in Britain, you might have dropped the earlier interest in what is happening in the former British Dominions and colonies.

Both Australia and Papua New Guinea are going into a real test of confidence in making effective constitutional laws that give independence. There have been enormous changes in the past ten years but party politics in P.N.G. is currently stalling the real adoption of Independence from Australia. A constitution has to be worked out for the new country to everyone's satisfaction. In Australia, the Aborigines in the past year have gained representative government in the limited sense that a consultative committee is elected to advise the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. The Australian government is expected to adopt and enact a report, just issued, on the right of Aboriginal people to own land. (This is fundamental justice. For the past 200 years, since the Europeans came, wholesale stealing and resale of Aboriginal lands paid for immigration programmes for people to come from Europe.) Naturally, the big mining companies and pastoral firms do not want to see this, and it will be interesting to see how much pressure will be put on the Whitlam government to amend anything. The subtle techniques of lobbying are

something that Aborigines of the present generation have got to learn fast.

I am told that Aborigines will be represented at Lagos, Nigeria, next year at the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture. An exhibition of our black craftwork is at present touring South-East Asia.

Jack Horner,
East Kurrajong,
N.S.W. Australia

Sir,

Due to the cunning meanderings of Mr. Larry Lowton, Headmaster of Primrose Hill High School, and company, pupils from high schools in Leeds and pupils from St. Kitts/Nevis have exchanged visits. The pupils from St. Kitts Nevis visited England and left on 8 July. It appears that there has been a deliberate attempt to prevent the students from having contact with the Black community.

Only two Black students went to the West Indies (a West Indian and an Asian), and conveniently only two students from the West Indies have any contact with the Black community. This is very minimal because the students have been crammed with a very 'heavy programme'. There is a deliberate attempt to give the West Indian students a very white-washed and biased opinion of Britain.

It is important that Black people both here and in the West Indies are aware of these types of conspiracies by individuals who claim to be working in the interests of good race relations, but are in fact nurturing the lies that have enslaved our people for 400 years. These West Indian students should see the reality of the existence of Black people in Britain.

They should know about the mis-education and brutality that Black children suffer at school in this society. They should know that Black people who came to England did not find gold, but police brutality, hot furnaces, funky houses and racist insults. They should also know that Black people are organizing and resisting this oppression. They should also, see their benefactors for what they are!

Imrhu
Leeds

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Due to inflation and the rising printing costs, *Race Today's* cover price goes up from 15p to 20p next month.

EDITORIAL

Racism in the Working Class

Mansfield Hosiery Mills Ltd., Harwood Cash Lawn Mills Ltd., Standard Telephones & Cable, Crepe Sizes, Malmic Lace, E.E. Jaffe, British Celanese, Perivale Gutterman, Coventry Art Castings, Punfield & Barstow, Yorkshire Carpets Ltd., Imperial Typewriters, Kenilworth Components and now Combined Optical Instruments Ltd.

Not by any means merely a who's who of employers of immigrant labour but arenas of class struggle waged consistently by black workers in recent times, particularly Asian. That is not to exclude the scores of minor unrecorded skirmishes which constitute the total struggle of black workers.

Not every arena is identical. Some, like Combined Optical Instruments Ltd., Malmic Lace, E.E. Jaffe, Crepe Sizes constitute the backwoods of British industry. Employing a handful of workers herded together in filthy sweat shop conditions, set in motion by outdated machinery, workers are kept at heel by Dickensian management and a wage differential which encourages merciless competition between individual black workers. A sixty hour week for a living wage is the norm and the workers remain largely non-unionised. Here, whites appear as foremen or a handful of highly skilled workers with the prestige and privileges of tradesmen working in remote isolation and estranged from black workers. They have unions of their own, invariably small and incestuous in their middle aged complacency. For them class struggle is an abstraction and class unity a humbug. For the unions, large and small, the struggle of black workers within these limitations is an administrative drag.

To distinguish between these working conditions and those of larger factories with a modern production process is to grasp the very complex relation between white and black workers, between the unions and black workers, between unions and unions. Here in the large factories the

production process has created a greater degree of interdependence between white and black workers. They live cheek by jowl on an assembly line. Says Prem Singh from Imperial Typewriters: 'How could I work next to a man for a year and ignore him?' Yet the division of labour along race lines persists, yet the difference in the wage packet that drives Mrs. Behn (an Imperial Typewriter worker) to tears persists. Here unionisation is not what the struggle is about.

Firstly, management cannot police hundreds of workers where in the backwoods they are able to police a mere handful. They need the union to negotiate and enforce productivity agreements, to reinforce the division of labour along race lines. Who gets what for how many hours is as much organised and directed by Bromley and Weaver, officials of the T&GWU, as it is organised and directed by the management of Litton Industries. Here the struggle between the races is sharper only because capital has brought them physically face-to-face with each other. Here the struggle against the union knows no compromise because the union is ever present as capital's henchman. Here too, nationalists of all hues and sexes — black and white, liberal civil righters, pseudo-Marxists, social workers, project hatchers, solidarity freaks compete for their final resting place. Yet in this very arena is a final resolution of the conflict within the working class possible. Alas, the very forces that perpetuate racism from the old world to the new, in actuality, create the conditions in which it is possible to subvert it.

To point to and emphasise the significance and particularity of black workers who inhabit the heart of the mass modern production process is not to exclude or be hived off from those who people the backwoods of British industry. It is not to ignore or exclude service workers, the housewife, the peasantry in India or Africa, the unemployed of Brixton, NottingHill, the rude boy in Kingston or Port-of-Spain.

To confine oneself in 1974 to tinkling around with democracy within trade unions, to exchange white bureaucrats for black ones is to ignore the potential power of an international hook-up between all oppressed peoples — productive or unproductive. Quite the opposite.

The power accumulated in the modern production process among the higher echelons of black labour today is easily redistributed or made available to black people internationally. RACISM BINDS US ALL.

Finally, for *Race Today* the working class is not an abstraction. The working class internationally is chiefly centred within the personalities of a host of the nameless faces who today challenge capital through the third world and as black workers here in Britain; some of whom have related their direct experiences throughout our pages in the last months. Therein for us, rests the power with the potential to release white workers from the jaws of trade unions, the various vanguard parties — all constituents of capitalism.

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BENGALI SQUAT IN THE EAST END

Asian families are not normally associated with squatting. The tight network of communities that Asian workers have formed in this country offers them alternative ways of housing themselves. Nevertheless, as the pressure for accommodation grows in Britain's conurbations, workers, both black and white are to provide their basic needs. Housing is one such, and in the East End of London a fringe of a new wave of immigrant families has been compelled to resort to squatting in order to have a roof over their heads.

The Bangla Deshi families with whom this article is chiefly concerned, haven't come to this form of action with any of the evangelism that justifiably exists in the squatting movement, or with the temporary license afforded by some councils to some squatters. Two of the groups of Bengali squatters who live on Greater London Council (GLC) property in Matlock Street in the borough of Tower Hamlets happen to be there almost unwittingly — they were conned into 'buying' a house and have only subsequently discovered that they have, as far as the authorities are concerned, the status of squatters.

Two other Bengali families on the same street took the conscious decision to squat to combat their homelessness. Both groups live in two houses out of the four hundred that the GLC has left vacant or officially vandalised to keep the homeless away.

The decision to squat in such an area is both an answer to extreme need and an act of considerable courage. The East End is not a friendly place, least of all to the eight or ten thousand Asians who provide the most recent recruits to the labour force of the traditional sweatshops of this dockland and commercial district. In the hot spring of 1970, the practice known as Paki bashing got its glare and share of publicity. White youths killed a man and maimed and injured others simply because, on the face of it, they were Asians. At the time, the Pakistani community formed vigilante groups which were discouraged by the local police. There were subsequent protests that the police had done little to stop what was an everyday occurrence and carried on the same as before after the TV cameras had gone.

The East End itself is an area thick with legend and fluid with the movement of a once fairly settled population. The Asian community has to constantly face the hostility of local racists. The tradition of unwelcome is the



least of the trials the Asian population has to fight against. One of the Bengali families in Whitehorse Road, on the same Mercers Estate, has been constantly harassed by other people on the street, and on 22 July became the victims of an open assault. A white neighbour who lives at 123 Whitehorse Road broke into their house and with a lot of racist mouthwash assaulted Mr. Khalid, pulling him out into the street and causing him enough damage to put him in hospital for a week. The police, on being approached by the family, and the East Stepney squatters' association, have to date taken no action.

The attack is in 'normal' terms inexplicable. It was the culmination of the racism rampant in the area amongst a few whites and the antipathy that has been manufactured by the press and by the sins of omission on the part of the local authorities, to the squatters in the area.

The Mercers Estate where the incident took place is a typical East End area designated by the GLC for redevelopment and rehabilitation. On the estate there are four hundred houses which the GLC bought over in a block from the Mercers Livery Company in 1970. The houses, most of them built in the nineteenth century, are in no sense totally uninhabitable. Of these houses, 145 are occupied by old tenants, quite a few of whom have lived there for generations. The rest of the families from these streets, have been gradually moved to new concrete developments in other parts of the East End, or moved out altogether. Seventy two of the houses are at present squatted by people who work locally and

are not provided with housing by the local authority or by the GLC. They are there because they find it impossible to rent accommodation in the East End and have literally nowhere else to go. About 175 of the houses belonging to the GLC have been bricked up, their doors and windows tombed against the intrusion of the needy.

The residents of 16 Matlock Street, who prefer to remain anonymous, tell their own story:

'When we first came to England we stayed for a few weeks with relatives. A friend of ours used to live in 10 Matlock Street, we don't know how he came to be there, we didn't ask. I'd been in England since '63. I went back to Bangla Desh in '72 where my wife and kids are, and I was forced to come back here to earn a living earlier this year. When I went back to Bangla Desh in '72, everything we owned had been destroyed by the Pakistani army, our fields and houses and my brother's medical practice. The British High Commission would not give my wife and my children an entry certificate, they said the queue was too long and there was a waiting list. They may let them in after a year. My brother who lives with me has been here three years, but they still won't let his wife and family in, though they are quite willing to use our labour in the factory and tailoring firm where we work. No. 10 where we lived was broken up by the Council and all the people in it were told to leave. We didn't know what it was all about but we had to go. This was a few months ago. At this time a West

Indian guy called Sammy used to work in 10 Matlock Street, repairing things. I can't speak English or understand it very well, but he told us that he could get us a house for £300. He took us to 15 Matlock Street where there was another West Indian man called Lewis. He asked me for a hundred pounds but later settled for £55. They said we could live there and that we were paying to replace his tenancy which he was voluntarily giving us. He said that we must pay the rates and that it was all legal. The first chap, Sammy, said he'd fix the place up for us, install doors and put in a toilet and so on. He said he'd bring a friend round and give us an estimate.

They took £30 to start with, and then for ten weeks pretended to be doing work on the place. They took £200 in that time. Nothing was getting done, Lewis was breaking more than he was building. We just paid out from money we borrowed, and watched. Then a neighbouring woman, a white woman who used to live next door called us and said she owned the house next door, 16 Matlock Street, and she'd give us the place for £300 down deposit and £10 each week. She said she'd give us a rent book. We were suspicious and asked her why she was giving us the house. She said she had a family in Italy and that she owned a lot of houses and that she'd be back. We were to send her the weekly rent when she returned from Italy and she gave us her address. She gave us an official piece of paper with a revenue stamp and a signature. We took the paper to a friend who can read English and he said that the paper declared that we had made a donation to the Mohamed Social Services. It said nothing about rent or about a house.

Three weeks later a white man and woman turned up and asked us how we came to be in the house. They said they were from the Council. They seemed to know all about Lewis and the money he had taken. When we questioned them, the man turned out to be a reporter from the *East London Advertiser* and he took away the piece of paper we had from the con-woman. After the newspaper, *East London Advertiser* carried the story on 29 March, the police sent someone round and asked us to turn up at the police station at 8 o'clock the next day. We went and told the story through an interpreter. They'd caught Lewis and the police explained to us that we were living in a GLC house. Lewis got two years.

A month later Mr. Harris from

the GLC came to see us and asked us to stay home from work the next day. He said we had no right to the house. I told him we would pay rents if they left us there because our families were coming and we needed a house. He gave us a lot of hope that something could be done in six months for us.

Three weeks after that we contacted him at his office and told us how to pay rates, but said that he couldn't help us, we should go to the local Tower Hamlets Council.

On 17 July the residents of Matlock Street were taken to court by the GLC and an eviction order was granted by the magistrate against them. They were presented in court as single men. Paradoxically, the immigration regulations have made them unwilling single men and this categorisation has been used against them to deny them a house from either the GLC or from the local Council.

The families at 18 Matlock Street came to the house on the Mercers Estate after being on the Council list for two years.

There are two families in our house. I live with my wife who is expecting another baby. Down-

stairs there's a Kenyan family, a man, his wife and three children. They've been here for one and a half years. We moved in a few months ago. We lived together in a house in Cannon Street. Then they moved out when his family came. He kept urging me to join him in this house, but I put my faith in the Council who had promised to rehouse me. Nothing happened. I lived in Cannon Street for two and a half years. You should have seen the place. Even the health inspector was shocked. The rain used to come in and the slates from the roof fell into the house. Everything was wrong with it. I used to work two weeks and then had to take every third week off because I fell ill. My wife was seriously ill and was taken to hospital. The doctor said it was the conditions we lived in and he wrote to the health department and that's when they came down.

When we first came to the house, there were two gas metres, one downstairs and one up here. Neither worked. So I phoned the Gas Board and two days later two men came and fixed them. Then a few days later two other men came and ripped out both the metres and disconnected the gas supply. I was at work when they

came. My wife and the other lady downstairs were at home with the children. My wife doesn't understand any English but the other lady understands a little as she comes from Kenya. The children can all speak it well, they understand everything. But they're young. My daughter is eight and the girl downstairs is only four. Anyway, these men were from the Gas Board and they told my wife and the children that they had a 'government order' - from the GLC - to take our metres away. My daughter told my wife that the man was from the government so they let them in the house. He asked my daughter a lot of questions. How long had

we been here? How many rooms did we have? Where had we lived before? When did she come to this country? Did she come with her father? Could she show him her father's passport? All kinds of things like this. My daughter told him what she knew. She says she can't remember all the questions they asked. Some she couldn't answer. What happened was they took our gas. Since then we've had no way to do any cooking. It has been very difficult. We cook and wash at other people's places. We can't even make a cup of tea. I've phoned

the GLC several times and as soon as I tell them my address they say they've been ordered by the GLC not to give us any gas. I never owed the Gas people any money. I can't understand it. I told them I would pay a deposit or whatever they wanted. They say it's not a question of money. Other people in this area are squatting and they have gas. I can't understand it. The real trouble I think is the GLC, they want us out. But how are we to leave? Where will we go? On the streets?

Immediately after we'd finished this interview, we phoned Douglas Eden of the GLC's Housing Committee. He assured us that it wasn't council policy to harass squatters by cutting off their gas or electricity. . . . Mr. Bird at the Gas Board, on the other hand, told us that his men ripped out the meters at 18 Matlock Street on GLC instructions to cut supplies to the squatters. Which every party is telling the truth, the family has neither gas, nor a house to use it in. One small victory for bureaucracy. One large tragedy for the family.

SHORT SHARP VICTORY IN LEICESTER



'What are you doing here, sonny? Piss off.'

In 1965 a small business man in Leicester with interests in the hosiery trade, pet foods and the shoe industry decided to expand his business into plastic components. Norman Peake and his wife Irene had seen the growing demand for plastics as a substitute for leather in footwear and, using their contacts in the industry as a base, they set up a company called Kenilworth Components to go into plastics processing. For the first few years, things turned over smoothly enough, but the company's growth was hardly spectacular. In 1967, they were joined on the board by Alan Rimmington and William Fallows, who brought in with them further expertise in the industry and additional knowledge of personnel policy.

By the end of the sixties, immigration into Leicester of A-

sian labour was well under way and a large number of Gujaratis, both from India and from East Africa, were looking for employment in the city. Kenilworth recruited from this section using Asian males as the operatives who would run the Vulco Plas machines to make soles and packaging for the British Shoe Corporation. Women trimmed up the goods, packaged them and despatched them.

It was a policy that paid Peake handsomely. He had access to a growing market, to cheap raw materials and to a cheap labour supply. If workers ever complained, he would simply sack them. If work was slack, he declared them redundant and then re-engaged them when things picked up again. Labour turnover was high, the workers never together for long enough to organise themselves. In 1969, the company declared a profit of just £71. But by 1972 they were making an annual gross profit of £87,843, on total assets of £215,236 - a highly healthy profit ratio.

In 1973, Peake brought in James Rowland-Jones, a Dorset based property speculator, and

developed his love for luxurious trappings. They bought a Jaguar XJ 12 and a beautiful country mansion in Old Bursleden near their friend, Rowland Jones place. To cushion himself against the harsher aspects of life, Peake paid himself a director's emolument of £12,831 and cut down his cost of living in Leicester by moving into a penthouse flat above the factory.

All this affluence of course was bought at the expense of his workforce. The men were paid £32 for a 60-hour week. They worked twelve hour shifts, operating two machines at once. When a meal break came round, they had to take it in turns to operate four machines or have half an hour off. There was no tea break, washing facilities were crude, their treatment by white foremen and managers was racist and abusive. By comparison, Asian workers in Delta Mouldings, a nearby factory engaged in the same work, earned £35 a week for operating just one machine for a 40-hour week. Effectively, Mr. Peake was screwing three times the production out of his workers for a £3 lower wage.

And the conditions of the women was even worse. They

worked a 42-hour week for £12. If they were never late in a month, they would receive £4 time-keeping bonus. One woman who had permission to go to the dentist lost her bonus. After stoppages, an average take-home pay worked out at about £10. After bus fares and sundries were taken out, the sum involved was a pitiful insult.

On Friday, 19 July, the women came to the end of their tether and asked for a rise. Management's response was immediate: Joe Smith, managing director and Peake's right-hand man, sacked eleven of them. Two Asian shop stewards from nearby Delta Mouldings and Barrington Plastics got to hear about the situation and started to talk to the women about the union. By Tuesday, management was faced with a mass rebellion of the women workers demanding the reinstatement of their friends. So they sacked them all. 'There are a few girls outside that we've made redundant,' Joe Smith told us. 'There's a shortage of work and it's impossible to employ them all. They refuse to work so we've sacked them. If anyone wants their job back, they can come and ask. I don't know what wages they earn and I think it will soon die down.'

Far from dying down, the women, few of them speaking English, all of them new to the discipline of industrial life, were organising a picket around the premises. At first very shy and nervous, unsure what to do next, they sat themselves down along the front of the factory. On the Wednesday afternoon they were

joined by one of the male operatives who had come out at lunch time to see what was going on. He too was promptly sacked. Later that afternoon some of the strike committee from Imperial Typewriters came to see what was happening and their response was immediate. They invited all the women to meet the whole strike committee that night. In a tense and packed meeting, they heard of the conditions of work, the terrible wages, and the women's fighting spirit. By the end of the meeting a bond had been forged between the two groups of workers, the Kenilworth women growing in power and confidence as they heard of the Imperials' workers' struggle.

As the meeting broke up, two car loads of male workers from Imperials drove back to Kenilworth and picketed the day shift as they came out of the factory. Beaten-down, tired, frightened, the men refused to support the strike for fear of losing their jobs. But they listened with interest to this car-load of fighting workers from the victorious strike in another part of town.

As the day-shift left, Hasmukh Khattani of the Imperial strike committee, spotted a notice in Gujarati in the factory window. He walked up to read it just as Peake was fetching something from the XJ 12. 'What are you

doing here sonny?' he demanded. 'Piss off out of it.' Used to his quiescent labour force, not yet accustomed to the profound changes that have taken place in Leicester over the past three months, Peake had bitten off more than he could chew. Eight angry men advanced on the management and told them just what they could do with their factory and their big cars, and their exploitation in words that left no doubt as to their intentions. A podgy, pasty-faced and chastened Peake waddled back inside to the safety of the factory penthouse.

When he awoke next morning he saw the pickets back on his gate, supported by workers from Barrington Plastics and Delta Mouldings. Other cars were on their way from Walkers' Crisps; the Transport and General Workers' Union, sensing the potential storm, behaving with a quite unusual speed, were on the phone trying to get negotiations started despite the fact that the women had only joined the union two days earlier.

By the end of the week, George Bromley, T&G full-timer with the blows of Imperials fresh in his consciousness was talking with horror of the 'cheap labour' at the factory. Egged on by the Department of Employment, terrified at the thought of another Imperials on his doorstep, he had



Eight o'clock on the Thursday morning. The women approached the men operatives, asked for support.

sorted out a temporary reduction in the working week to 30 hours for the women, a basic wage of £18 and had forced up the overtime rate to 45p an hour. The entire work-force was reinstated, and he promised to deliver a whole new package deal within two weeks. Norman and Irene Peake still have the XJ 12, of course, and the place in the country. But times have got a bit tighter. Raw material in the plas-

tics business has got more expensive with the rise in oil prices, and the bottom has temporarily dropped out of property speculation. And now they have a new and powerful force to deal with - a proud and angry work force which has just learned a salutary lesson about its own strength in a short, sharp and victorious strike. Mr. Peake won't be calling anyone 'sonny' for the next few months.

IN SLOUGH

30 Asian workers were suspended during July at the Slough firm of Combined Optical Industries. Their crime? They refused to work twelve hours a day any more. They ignored their contracts which said in one paragraph that the basic working week was sixty hours, and in the next that the basic working day was eight hours. They called on their union, the AEUW, to support them, and in a short but victorious struggle they returned at the end of the month to put in a normal 37½ week like other workers.

The men are employed as moulding machine operators, a continuous process involving moulding crystal plastic into fine lenses for optical instruments. Managing Director David Stern has long felt that the company did the men a favour by forcing them to work long hours and thus earn enough money to send some back home for relatives. It came as some surprise to him, that this highly profitable fashion of exploitation was no longer in order, that his apparently docile work force were no longer prepared to do it, that instead they wanted to get home at night like anyone else.

After two attempts at suspending them for three days, now the men are working two shifts of 37½ hours and being

paid either for 42 or 48, depending whether they are on night shift or not. Negotiations have started too on a pay rise to bring them up to 70p an hour. Not much more than a minimum wage, but it still beats working twelve hours a day.

STRIKES & BLOCKADES AT FORDS

It's never quiet at this place, especially in the last few months. Blokes are prepared to fight and there is a lot to fight about. The way it's going, Ford could have a hot autumn on their hands after the holiday-shutdown.

The Dagenham bosses have been up to their yearly pre-holiday tricks - lay-offs, when we all most need the money. But in return they got more than they bargained for. Just over a month ago the unions signed an agreement with Fords, giving paid washing-up and preparation time to lineworkers, which means effectively a further half hour overtime per shift. It wasn't given to off-line workers, however, in what seems a deliberate move to split

line workers and off-lineworkers.

Consequently, groups of off-line workers took action, especially in the PTA. First, the seats and cushions went out, then the repairmen (RTR) at the end of the lines. The rest of us in the PTA were laid off each time, without pay. Several hundred lineworkers in the Body plant, laid off on Monday, 24 June, nevertheless went in, demanding pay. The next day, the demand was put again, and, not getting it, 600 blokes struck for the day, in spite of an attempt by union officials to get everyone back at work.

On Tuesday, 2 July, the PTA was laid off after a strike of the RTR for wash-up time. We'd had enough of these layoffs, so the next night most of us from the Final lines on the A shift refused to start work, demanding lay-off pay, for Tuesday night. The deputy convenor showed up, and by the time we'd finished with him, he had his jacket and tie off. 'Look more like a worker!' someone had shouted as he got up to speak. His attempt to get us back failed; so he gave up in disgust and went home to bed. Then we decided to try for support from other sections, so we marched down the line as a group over to the front suspensions, a militant section, singing 'we shall not be moved'. Half were for it, half undecided; they'd tried the same thing themselves a few weeks before and failed.

But we were determined not to: we marched down to the end of the lines, and blockaded them with a huge barrow full of cush-

ions, into which a few blokes immediately jumped to relax. The other line was sabotaged, and the 25-30 of us stood around the next cars off. From the one, no cars moved. Everyone else got paid the whole shift plus overtime for doing sweet F/A. The bosses and security stood around open-mouthed or sour-faced, as we spent the night talking, sleeping and making posters with our demands, and hanging them all over the place. They couldn't believe we were so solid - 33% black, 33% Asian and 33% white - the racial breakdown of the PTA. Some blokes on the trim lines began collecting money for us, but this got stopped by a shop steward who claimed it was unauthorised. But who authorised our blockade of the line but us - the workers?

So the fight for full layoff pay goes on. The week we took action, blokes at Rolls Royce in Coventry, lineworkers, sat-in when they got laid off on the Monday.

PTA lineworkers

The Imperial Typewriters Solidarity Committee would like to thank the brothers and sisters up and down the UK and abroad who rallied so rapidly and so effectively to support the struggle in Leicester.

"WORK SHARING AND THE THREE DAY WORKING WEEK ARE THE ONLY ANSWER"

Workers at the London Brick Company's premises in Bedfordshire face the threat of massive redundancies in the near future. Despite last year's record profits, the company claims that it faces a major downturn in production following on the slump in house-building. A large majority of the workforce are immigrants - largely Indian, Italian, Pakistani and East European - and despite a long tradition of quiescence in the labour movement in Bedford, a mass meeting held in the town on Sunday 27 July called for a 'Right To Work' campaign to be launched. London Brick say that 430 jobs are at risk in Bedford alone, and a further 200 in their other works nearby. Further redundancies of up to 2,000 are being hinted at if the situation does not improve.

LBC is the largest brick company in the world and has a monopoly on the most common types of bricks used in Britain. Its works stretch out south of the town of Bedford on the unique carboniferous clays which are used to make the 'Flettons' or common house bricks. The works fill the air for miles around with foul vapours from their tall chimneys and the workers labour under conditions of extreme heat and unpleasantness. Wages among some sections are high: 'setters' on piece work and bonus who load and sort the bricks as they come from the furnaces work 'like slaves' all day but can take home £50 or £60 at the end of the week. Since the war the brick industry has come to rely more and more on immigrant labour as white workers refused to do the job. First the company employed prisoners of war, and by the time they were all repatriated in 1948,

a team of recruiting scouts had scoured Europe for displaced persons and refugees seeking a new life as European Voluntary Workers or cheap labour. Many of these came from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and the Ukraine.

In the 1950s the EVWs were replaced by Italians fleeing from the poverty of the south, and they were joined from 1955 by West Indians and at the beginning of the 1960s, by Indians and Pakistanis. These are the people who make up the bulk of the work force. In 1969, despite the fact that Bedford had 600 people on the unemployed register, not one white worker would sign on for LBC and the company had to get a special dispensation to bring in a further 30 workers from Italy.

The struggle against the redundancies is being fought on two levels. The official trade union movement, composed of the T&G and the AEUW, plus APEX, the white-collar union, have set up a joint negotiating committee to liaise with the company. They have worked out a programme of voluntary redundancies with some men, mostly in skilled engineering jobs, taking the redundancy money from the company and finding work elsewhere, and other, mainly older, men taking an early retirement. They have also negotiated a slight reduction in the number of jobs at risk.

But the struggle is also being carried forward at another level. A group of activists working through the Young Indians Association and the Indian Workers' Association, together with an ex-LBC steward and Trade Council member, Ken Derrick, are calling for work sharing and are discussing the possibility of a work-in

at the plant. They issued leaflets to workers in Italian, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and English inviting them to the Sunday meeting. To this initiative Stan Clarry, the district secretary of the T&G, said: 'It's all very well them calling mass meetings, but the workers don't usually attend normal branch meetings of the union.' Italian and Indian workers we talked to explained first of all that they never knew where the branch meetings were to be held, that stewards never represented their interests, seeming instead to work for management, and that the union never did anything for them. As the official negotiating committee was opposed to work sharing and outright opposition to redundancies, they couldn't see much point in supporting it.

London Brick claim the redundancies are due to the cyclical nature of the housing market - housing starts to the 31 May this year stood at 38,953, the lowest since 1929. LBC claim to have 250 million bricks stacked up round the works, waiting for buyers since three quarters of their production goes to house building. Against this, the rank and file activists point out that sites they are in contact with complain of a seven-week delay in brick deliveries from LBC and they add that far from using their wagons to transport flettons, LBC have subcontracted many of them to a firm in St. Neotts to transport paper.

1973 was another record year for LBC. They bought the Whittlesea Central Brick Co, thus consolidating their monopoly position, and turned in a profit of £8,927,000 - a ratio of 29% on capital employed. They also diversified into portable buildings

by their acquisition of Banbury Buildings Ltd. In addition they have come to a deal with the GLC to use their pits to dispose of the capital's waste through a company called Easidispose, and have purchased a transformer company in Watford. In another interesting side line, they have gone in with the Marquis of Tavistock to form a company called Fantasia which will convert 600 acres of the old works at Ridgmont into a mammoth leisure park just three-quarters of an hours drive from London.

Bedford is a quiet and sleepy market town which relies to a large extent on London Brick for employment of a significant number of its large immigrant population. In the older housing to the west of the railway, where many of the brick workers live, we talked to Indian workers who told how their gang of five was reduced to four in a speed-up policy agreed to between management and union without their knowledge; how the bus came to the end of their street every morning and took them to the works, where their conditions were like 'those of slaves', and how they were too tired at the end of the day to do anything but sleep. We talked to Italians who had come originally on four year contracts, desperate for work after the slums of Italy, who now felt strong enough to display the action group's leaflets in the canteen despite official union hostility; who felt that work sharing and a three-day working week were the only answer, or the complete nationalisation of the building industry and the mortgage system, thus ensuring continuity of employment in decent conditions. But caught between the devil of the poverty at home and the deep blue sea of unemployment in Britain, the next stage of the struggle is not clear to them.

BIRMINGHAM FIELDWORKER

The Catholic Commission for Racial Justice seeks third worker to extend and coordinate work of the two fieldworkers, particularly on political and industrial issues, to work closely with the other commissions and race organisations, and act as spokesman to and for the Catholic community on issues of racial justice. Base: Birmingham or London. Salary to be negotiated. Further details from Kevin Barry, 16 Stoney Road, Coventry.

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Appeal Court 5. Strand. 3.30 pm, Friday, 26 July, 1974. There is silence as Lord Justice Lawton, Justice Nield and Justice Cantley clear their papers. A small door opens and the three defendants file into the dock. Lloyd James sits on the left hand side. Brown suit, short hair, kipper tie, sharp dresser. His face a mask of street wisdom. Horace Parkinson in the middle. Strong looking, grey patterned jacket, beard, bit Afro, concern and hope in his eyes. Robin Sterling on the right, 15 years old and grown from boy to man in four months. A boy's sweater and shirt on a man's body.

Dan Hollis QC leads on behalf of James. He's not appealing against conviction, just against sentence. He accepts that James kicked and punched the policeman, an officer who had arrested him on a suspicious person charge 24 days earlier, but he says the crowd was goading him on. 'If young men kick officers, they are in danger of losing their liberty', interjects Lord Justice Lawton, and Hollis has to agree with that. He wonders whether it wouldn't be better to send James to Borstal or perhaps even community service - he accepts that James is a bad lad, but couldn't something else be tried, as he was probably provoked by the situation.

'Just as an illustration,' interrupts the judge. 'If a young man on a political demonstration pushes glass into a police horse's flank and a riot ensues, he can hardly expect to claim that all he did was to be cruel to an animal. He started the riot.' James, he argued, was the start of the riot and that was pretty serious. True, thought Hollis, and his client had been fighting pretty hard, but the police had pushed him too. The case for Lloyd James lasted just twenty minutes and was marginally less convincing than a junior school debate. Lloyd's face told us nothing, but it was as though he knew he was the scapegoat, the one who was up for grabs.

The judge knew the score - 'I note from press reports and the number of people in the public gallery, that this case has aroused considerable concern,' he told us, 'and I want people to know that it will be looked at very carefully.' Cyril Salmon PC came up next to put the case for Horace Parkinson. His argument was based on the written statements of three witnesses who had not come forward at the time of the original trial, and affidavits testifying to Horace's good character from the vicar, the leaders of the youth club where he worked part-time, the local community relations officer and JP. The judges liked the JP touch. Salmon was appealing against both conviction and sentence, and in doing so chose to emphasise Parkinson's involvement as an individual rather than as part of a group. The activities that might have been not premeditated,

planned, and Parkinson was



BROCKWELL THREE APPEAL

undoubtedly a fine young man as the various reports testified.

It was hard to tell from this presentation of the story that Parkinson, according to eye witness reports gathered by this magazine, was indeed an innocent bystander caught up in the melee. Despite this strategy, it seemed as though the tide was running Parkinson's way as Lawton accepted that he was 'obviously an admirable young man - for such a man to be involved in a criminal offence was most unusual'. The court adjourned at 4.30, having agreed to meet on the next Wednesday. Too early to predict anything of the verdict except that Lloyd James would be lucky to even have six months knocked off his sentence.

When the court reassembled Jeremy Hutchinson QC led for Robin Sterling's appeal. The room was again crowded, the judges again assured us that they were aware of the concern in the community. An unbridgeable gap appeared between the life style and experience of those in the dock, their families and friends assembled in the body of the court and outside jammed into the corridors, and the judges, barristers and solicitors exchanging historical references, shared socialisation and abstruse points of law. Hutchinson launched a concise attack on the handling of the case. He questioned the identification procedures, the question of whether Sterling was left-handed or right-handed, the lack of references to his good character in the summing up by the judge, the direction from which the bottles and missiles came. It was a masterly performance, a gentlemanly debate between equals, joined by the barrister for the police, who obviously put a few good points but didn't quite have the *je ne sais quoi* to quite persuade the learned judges.

Promptly at 2pm the court reassembled. The judges wanted a short clarification on the question of Robin's left-handedness, retired for five minutes and came back to deliver their verdicts.

It was left to Justice Nield to do the actual boot-work. In careful and measured terms he went

through the charges and repeated the judges' insistence that there were too many of them. Then he dealt with Lloyd James and told us that Judge Abdela had not misdirected on a point of law. He reminded us that the two complaints on the conviction of Parkinson were not pursued, but that appeal against conviction was still pursued on the grounds of fresh evidence. Next he reminded us that Sterling was appealing on the grounds that the judge had misdirected. He ran through the Brockwell Park incident again, and reminded us what a shocking affair it had been and what the alleged part of each had been.

On the part of Parkinson, evidence had been produced from three witnesses. One had not turned up at the original trial because she was in Jamaica; another because she was in hospital having a baby; another because he was scared of the police. This was not good enough. The solicitors should have sought out the new witnesses at the time of the trial and brought them to court. The evidence was not accepted. There was additional evidence of his good behaviour from the prison governor. In the case of James, he was a man of bad character - at this he ran through Lloyd's background to remind us who he is and what he has done.

Next he dealt with Robin, at length, taking up the points on identification and saying that the court now has stringent rules on this question which must be adhered to. On this basis, the appeal of Sterling was allowed. A ripple ran through the crowd. Mrs. Sterling lost ten years from her face in ten seconds. Robin looked as though he would jump over the rails and kiss everybody in court.

'Mr. Salmon has pointed out that this trouble has caused great concern in the Brixton community,' continued Justice Nield, 'and this court shares that concern. Representation has been provided by that community, which consists of honest law-abiding people. The Court hopes that people will realise that we have given considera-

tion to every aspect of this case, but it was a very serious offence. The officers were set upon with great violence by ruffians in the crowd, and the bare facts illustrate the courage of the police

'What is the duty of the court? In cases of violence, riot and affray, it is always necessary to impose custodial sentences. Having regard to all the circumstances, the court feels unable to interfere with the sentences of Parkinson and James. No point of law arises, nor is there any question of principle. There is a need to preserve public order. Therefore the application of Parkinson and James are refused and the appeal of the youth Sterling is allowed.'

It was unbelievable. While the lawyers sorted out amongst themselves the question of fees, the crowd surged out of the court room. Lloyd back inside for three years, the appeal not allowed. That was expected. The campaign had been around the Brockwell Park Three, but the whispers had always said that Lloyd stood in the way of the other two, his crime to fight back, to run from his old adversary, the police, to struggle like a street boy. But Horace Parkinson, the good boy, the lad who had done nothing, whose father had handed out hundreds of leaflets appealing for witnesses, the youth worker who refused to fight but simply gave in to his own arrest and called for calm from prison. Outside, his mother had fainted. Her friends were crying, the students action group were stunned, a horrified silence reigned.

What was left? A direct appeal to the Home Secretary? Calling on the assistance of John Frazer, MP for the area and junior minister at the Home Office? More campaigning, leafletting, demonstrating? Fine. But next time a Brockwell Park situation develops, and there will no doubt be a next time, who is going to stand there and meekly accept arrest? When a youth with an unblemished record, affidavits and witnesses from the leading part of the middle-class community activists pulls a three-year sentence for something he didn't do, who next time will meekly allow himself to be arrested? Who will not fight and kick and punch like mad next time the police arrive?

On the morning of the final appeal, Scotland Yard announced bravery awards for the three constables mainly involved in the fighting. Like the members of the Special Patrol Group who murdered two unarmed youths in the Indian High Commission last year and received bravery awards, the state has confirmed its total and uncompromising support for its forces. The final verdict of the Brockwell Park Three appeal sounds much like a drawing up of the battle plan. The youths on the front line will not have missed the point.

Back to Work at Imperial

The strike at Imperial Typewriters is over. Phased return to work has been negotiated. *Race Today* concludes the final chapter in the victorious struggle of Asian workers.

The penalty for falsifying company records, for clocking on another employee or for stealing from the company is instant dismissal. For insubordination or sleeping on the job — first a written warning, and if it happens again, dismissal. But for breaking any of the safety rules the penalty is first a written warning, then three days off and only if it happens a third time, dismissal.

This balance of priorities is enshrined in Imperial Typewriters' company rules and discipline procedure: its existence was one of the first things that the returning strikers established at the end of the twelve week long bitter dispute that had rumbled on in Leicester since May Day. After constant picketing, three national rallies, a Transport and General Workers' Union enquiry and an obvious and profound split in the union's ways of thinking and doing, the 400 Asian strikers negotiated their basic demand for a return to work with no victimisation and started back to work on Monday, 22 July.

It had been a long battle, but the strikers were unanimous that it had been worthwhile. Despite the hundreds of setbacks that had been put in their way — the refusal of the union to make the strike official, the hostility of much of the local population, the constantly negative reporting of the local paper, the intervention of every layer of the state and sub-state organisations, the twelve weeks of poverty and the fearful costs incurred by some strikers' families — despite all of these, the workers felt that a deep and lasting change had been brought about in the pattern of their lives. Where the strike had started as a spontaneous walk-out by people at the end of their tether, it had become an act of mass rebellion by the end of the first week that had no clear idea of what to do next. By the end, the workers had become a unified force, proud and confident of themselves and their strength. At the end of the first week back at work they called a mass meeting to discuss what had been learned in the struggle and what they saw as the way forward for the future. Mrs. Sharda Behn explained how she had been greeted:

'The first day I got back to work, my foreman asked me what I had gained in the last twelve weeks. He was making fun of me I know. But I told him that I had lost a lot of money but I had gained a lot of other things. I told him I had learned how to fight against him for a start. I told him he couldn't push me

around any more like a football from one job to another. I told him I now knew many things I didn't know before. In the past when I used to get less money in my wage packet I used to start crying at once. I didn't know what else to do. I told the foreman, next time I won't cry, I'll make you cry.'

Prem Singh went back to work and found that everyone treated him with an unaccustomed respect: instead of a constant barrage of racist nonsense, white workers were polite and friendly. When women refused to lift heavy motors onto the line, foremen came running to help them lift the boxes. Hasmukh Khetani was transferred to a new section and



Sharda Behn. The women were at the forefront of the struggle.

deliberately went out of his way to press his new workmates into discussion only to find a sort of questioning respect instead of the rudeness and ignorance displayed in the past. Anyone who saw the workers coming out of the factory during that first week commented on the difference between their cheerful confident faces and the half-dead expression that most workers wear after a day on the production line.

How They Settled

The settlement had been thrashed out after long talks between the local officials of the union, the Regional Secretary, the Department of Employment, Imperials themselves and the strike committee. There had been a period immediately following the two week closure of the factory for the summer holiday, when the strike committee had feared the whole thing might fall to pieces. The official union enquiry had been finished three weeks before, sections of the strikers were demoralised and feeling the financial strain, there seemed to be no movement in any of the negotiations. To the strikers the union's tardiness looked like an exercise in scientific strike-breaking. To sustain themselves during that holiday period they held a couple of concerts in the Highfield Community Centre which had been their main base throughout. They set up a series of discussion classes. Numbers of them spoke and attended picket lines in Nottingham, Leeds and London. They sent off a stream of angry letters to Brian Mathers, the T&G Regional Secretary, demanding action. And they chartered buses and took 150 of their number for a day trip to Skegness. And as the factory went back to work, negotiations started in earnest.

A profound split had occurred in the union hierarchy. At the local level, Reg Weaver, the factory convenor and mainstay of the white workers, and many of the shop stewards, were saying that if the strikers were taken back, they would walk out. George Bromley, the district secretary was still talking about 'outsiders', Chinese communist money, and 'doing things according to the book', while inside the bureaucracy orders had come from higher up to sort out the mess in Leicester. Reg Harris (a full-timer from Nottingham who had already taken a few blows to his preconceptions from Asian workers in disputes in his own town), was sent down to Leicester to see what could be built out of the ruins of the local organisation. Bromley wasn't told of his presence there until one morning much to

his surprise he found him answering the phone in the union office at the factory. Between them, this unlikely collection of bureaucrats and time-servers stitched together a deal that would allow the return to work of all the strikers and leave the outstanding matters of bonus negotiation, shop floor democracy and internal racism to later discussion once the workers were back inside.

Strikers' Response

The strike committee welcomed this settlement. But they went on to add a few thoughts of their own: 'Throughout this dispute we knew we were fighting not only for the general interests of the working class, but for the interests of black workers in particular, since it is they who suffer from the worst injustices in employment. A singular feature of this strike has been the role played by the Asian women. They were militant and the struggle itself educated them in standing up for their own rights.'

'All in all', they continued in their statement at the end of negotiations, 'we believe that we have scored a great victory and we believe that the coming months will bear this out. But the most important thing during our struggle was the way in which it taught us how to stand up and fight. Our own example makes it very clear that this is the only way for black workers in Britain, facing similar injustices.'

'Our struggle has taught us also that black workers must never for a moment entertain the thought of separate black unions. They must join the existing unions and fight through them. Where the unions fail in their duties to black workers they must be challenged to stand up for their rights. The union is an organisation of all workers, regardless of race, colour or sex. Right now the trade union movement in Britain is functioning as a white man's union and this must be challenged. In challenging this, we believe in the unity of the working class. This unity must be solidly established in deeds and not only in words. It is the main task of the trade union movement to create this unity.'

'One of the recommendations we would like to make to the trade union movement as a lesson from our dispute is that the trade union movement as a whole should awaken to the problem of black workers' interests and set up special departments to deal with the peculiar problems of discrimination not experienced by other sections of the working class. We do not think that this can divide the working class: on the contrary it will strengthen it. We believe in the unity of the working class, but not in a sham unity.'

National Front Intervention

While the strikers celebrated their victory, the local branch of the National Front issued a leaflet calling on 'Britons to Unite'. The NF told white workers that an 'atrocious betrayal' had been carried out under their noses to prevent Imperials losing any more production or profit. It was a populist leaflet carefully aimed at



The Victory Rally in Spinney Hill Park.

the deepest layers of ingrained racism amongst white workers, telling them that it was still their factory and their city, calling on them to use their power to force Imperial to back down. And the NF obviously had access to confidential information that could have only come at high management or union level, for it was they who first announced that a series of meetings had taken place between Litton's American management and union officials at Llandudno. Later, Anthony Reed-Herbert, the NF organiser in Leicester was to tell the *Workers' Press*: 'We have members at Imperial pretty well from the boardroom downwards. We have sympathisers in trade union positions in the factory. Our members have been behind this campaign from the beginning.'

And there was undoubted resentment amongst white workers who felt that they had been sold out in a management manoeuvre to get production back to normal. A group told how they had been informed by Reg Weaver that the Asians were complaining that they weren't receiving 140% bonus — a neat and plausible distortion of the original grievances which caused the walk-out. To the white workers, themselves angry at the way union organisation had been mishandled in the factory — cards not being handed over for months, their own economic demands ignored, safety regulations flouted and so on — the final settlement, carried out way above their heads at regional and national level, looked like a huge sell-out of their interests. The NF propaganda fell onto fertile soil.

For Litton had indeed ordered a settlement at any cost. With demand for their products rising at 15% per annum world-wide and showrooms in Britain

and Europe beginning to complain about lack of typewriters to sell, John Gilluly, president of Royal-Imperial, was sent over from the States to get a settlement. And it was through his pressure, answerable to the Beverley Hills head office, that the final compromise was hammered out. But it was not to be that easy. On the Sunday before the return to work, another rally was held, this time to celebrate the victory. Strikers dismissed any idea that there would be a walk-out or back-lash as prophesied by Weaver and Bromley. 'They are our friends,' said one of them, 'we will talk to them when we get back in. You can't work alongside someone for a year and just ignore him. Our next job is to win over the white workers.'

Racist Mobilization

But as the strikers started to return on Monday, 500 white and a few Asian and West Indian workers who had stayed in the factory walked out and held a mass meeting in Spinney Hill Park. They agreed to a one-day stoppage on the Tuesday in protest at the company's decision to take back some Asians who 'have carried out threats and intimidation'. The meeting was addressed by some of the white stewards from the factory including Bill Batstone, vice-chairman of the Leicester district committee of the T&GWU. And Reg Weaver, who had been a party to the original agreement between the strikers, the union and the factory, said to the meeting: 'This is a situation where we feel that a minority cannot say boo to the management and then come back. And there are a number of known vicious people who have uttered threats.' We are yet to hear a stronger defence of management and from the man who had sat for fourteen years on the union's national

executive. At the back of the meeting, the National Front's flags floated gently in the breeze. Weaver was at home.

The next day 300 white workers assembled in the Trades Hall. There they were addressed by George Bromley, another party to the original agreement, and Reg Weaver again in the vanguard of anti-working class reaction. They arrived at a decision not to cooperate with a list of 25 people who, they claimed, were 'trouble makers'. It was a confused situation. Some of the workers came because of their genuine resentment of the privileged treatment they thought the Asians were getting. Others because their stewards had told them it was an official strike, still others because they wanted a day off work. Although many were undoubtedly angry, the prevailing mood was resignation: back at the factory there was no sign of any picketing and Asian strikers were later to report that far from 'non-cooperation', things were going remarkably smoothly. Bromley's appearance at the meeting, as indeed Weaver's, throws up some profound questions about their role in the T&G and that union's own internal discipline for both had been party to the return to work agreement in the first place. And over it all hung the shadow of racism — Weaver, putting one side of the argument forward, claimed: 'There is no racialism in our union and we would not permit it to be carried out in our factories where we have membership. If there is any discrimination, it is amongst the Asians themselves, for it is easy to precipitate rows between them over promotion. . .'. And Batstone put the case for white racism even more clearly. 'Sooner or later,' he thundered, 'somebody had to stand up and be counted. The Asians cannot come here and make their own rules.'

Yet for all the fire and brimstone, the return to work progresses as we go to press with little of the gloomy racial strife predicted by the Greek chorus. Odd incidents were reported of a scuffle here, a disagreement there, but by and large there was not only amity, but also curiosity from white workers. The resentment was undoubtedly there too, with some complaining that the Asians were 'too cocky by half' and a universal distrust of management's decision to set up an equal opportunity office inside the works.

Losses and Gains

After the move back to work had started, the meetings at the community centre continued, and the workers agreed to continue them weekly to maintain the unity and consciousness that had been built up during the strike. Further than that, they were determined to start winning white workers over to their point of view and invite them along to the meetings as well. And the women themselves have started to organise as women. As Sharda Behn and Jayshree Doshi put it: 'We women always sit together at the mass meetings, but it doesn't mean that we are separate from the men. Even in our own families when we go out the women sit together. It's our tradition. We like to be

together to discuss things and the men show their respect by sitting on the other side. Because of this strike we've built a lot of unity and now we want to keep that. To do this we are going to form a woman's group to discuss what we do at work and how we are treated in the factory. They will have to treat us all differently now because we are all together and if they treat one of us badly we will all know about it. That is what they don't want. . . .'

It had been an expensive strike. A married couple who both worked at the factory, estimated that all told it had cost them a £1,000 in lost wages and day-to-day running costs. A single man estimated he had lost £400. Another guessed at £350 in lost wages alone. But the benefits could not be counted in tens or even hundreds of pounds. From their struggle so much had been learnt. People who had at the beginning been scared and shy had grown enormously in stature. They had lost any illusions they might have had about British society and in their place had a clear and precise view of the nature of industrial society and the position of black people in it.

And they had demythologised a lot of other institutions as well. Obviously the T&G had had as much of a traumatic battering out of the struggle as the workers themselves. While on the one hand the General Secretary can write glowing phrases about the need to combat racialism, and the annual conference passes fine resolutions against the Immigration Acts, on the ground floor and in the regional offices the union seems peopled with racists of all hues and descriptions. The white left, too, has taken a drubbing out of the three month long battle. Their response has varied from that of the van-

guard leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party who called a meeting on the strike and used it as an opportunity to call just for the end of the Labour government and the building of an alternative leadership within the trade union movement instead of addressing themselves to the concrete problems and perspectives of the strike. And the international Socialists, who offered little practical help throughout the strike, who attended the mass rallies in mere handfuls, who promised motions of support and money which never came, who mentioned the strike twice in their paper in the first ten weeks, the one group who might have had the capacity to win over some of the white workers inside the factory; the IS group's non-involvement left them with little credit. And the Community Party, after 12 weeks of strike activity hinted that the behaviour of the strikers alienated much of the goodwill which existed among white workers — a hard racist position indeed!

While the fruits of the strike could be seen in the immediate response the strike committee offered in support of the women at Kenilworth Components (see this issue) the decision to continue the meetings in future, the formation of the women's group, the critical and political support of the trade union movement rather than the scare story of separate black workers' movement, the financial strains, albeit cushioned by the extended family system, will show for months. Yet 400 Asian workers took on one of the biggest multinationals in the world and in doing so posed so many profound questions that the entire working class will in the end benefit from the struggle. That is the measure of their achievement. It is a major one.



Members of the strike committee go back to work.

The following mini-supplement was written and prepared by The Action Committee of European Immigrant Workers and is intended to give a general insight into the problems, attitudes and struggles of European migrants, particularly in the catering industry. The political positions taken in the supplement are those of the authors and are not necessarily held by the Editorial Collective of *Race Today*.



Trade Unionism and the European Immigrant Worker

The original force behind the formation of the International Branch, within the T&GWU, was a very strong movement originating within the European immigrant workforce employed in the catering industry. We wanted to organise ourselves in order to defend our rights, which had been until then left to the work of individuals.

The Branch developed rapidly. The workers recognised that the International Branch was the only organisation prepared to identify with them and go out on the street and demonstrate. The existence of the International Branch led to pickets of the Mount Royal, Europa Hotel (Metropolitan Hotels Limited) and other catering establishments. We started the struggle, our pickets and our strikes brought victories and new experiences. Nonetheless, the actions taken by the International Branch could have been stronger, better organised and more widespread. The original enthusiasm of the workers for the organisation quickly disappeared because of the inability of the Branch to organise and guide the struggle of the immigrants effectively.

Over the last three months no meetings have taken place. This is because the T&GWU could not even offer the International Branch 'accommodation'. At the same time the leadership of the Branch appears to be unwilling to recruit new leaders from among the general membership, neither have they been able to organise around the issues, continuously thrown up by the pressure from the base,

and politically vitalise the situation. How can immigrant workers be expected to understand and participate in the working of a Union if the real controllers of the International Branch (i.e. full-time union officials) do not even bother to acquire a basic knowledge of the conditions or languages of the people whom they represent? We can clearly see the mistakes which have been made with regard to the relationship between the T&GWU and the International Branch over the two and a half years of the latter's existence. We can also see that within the rank and file of the International Branch there is a lot of very good political material to make a positive workers' movement. Moreover, the T&GWU signed, last September, with the GMWU an agreement which divided between them entire chains of hotels and catering establishments. This surprisingly was done behind the back of the workers concerned, who saw from one day to the next their Union leaving them in the hands of a well-known bureaucratic giant (i.e. GMWU) which was not prepared to support their demands, represent them or indeed defend them in their daily confrontation with their employers. Their basic right to organise under a chosen union had been taken away.

In our opinion, the signing of this agreement represents the precise limits the T&GWU imposed on the development of the International Branch. There were certain cases where our membership had grown so large that the T&GWU officials

'suggested' the formation of separate branches from our own. How then, can we now ask the immigrant workers to join our Branch which is devoid of any independent power? It is not exactly clear to us where to lay the blame for this situation, whether with the present leadership of the International Branch, the T&GWU, or the general working of the trade union organisation in this country? Something seems to stand in the way of the immigrant's political participation in the life of this country.

Officially our Branch has 1,700 members who are making clear to their leadership their dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the T&GWU's official representatives. Some are leaving, potential members decline to join, others are gradually losing interest and the number of activists is getting less and less. Before all the members become disenchanted we must bring new blood into the organisation, discuss and amplify the need of imposing our democratic control on the union, and work towards the creation of an organisation capable and willing to work with and for its members. We cannot conceive why the Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, etc., have been unable to achieve the same successes as those of the Turkish workers here in England. Their unity and political motivation should be an example to us all. They now occupy the leading position in the struggle of immigrant workers, as can be seen in their strike success against Wimpey Bars. The Turkish Workers' Committee, who have

made available to all other workers the success and failure of their actions, have earned for themselves a position of predominance among us and constitute the central pillar of the International Branch.

Now the International Branch must mobilise its workers, firstly to invalidate the agreement between the T&GWU and the T&GWU which resulted in the loss of thousands of members to both the T&GWU and the International Branch, and secondly to create an organisation which will be founded on the democratic election of union full-time officials from among and by the rank and file, an organisation which will be able to present a perspective of work and struggle so much required by the workers. An immigrant organisation within the T&GWU

would not mean, as presently believed, a ghetto; on the contrary, it would mean the rejection of bureaucratic restrictions, which presently prevent its progress, the enlargement of its membership, and a better understanding of the workers at all levels by the democratically elected full time union representatives. It would mean control over the Branch's funds, allowing the establishment and maintenance of an office (presently the International Branch contributes over £200 a week to the T&GWU coffers). It would permit the printing and distribution of a monthly bulletin, in all the languages of its members. It would mean the organisation of national committee's within the International Branch. If we cannot break down our difference with the T&GWU

and work out a common agreement whereby the above mentioned ideas can materialise, then the responsibility for the disappearance of this immigrant branch from the British Trade Unions will rest squarely with the official leadership of the T&GWU.

The official workers' organisations in Britain have to recognise, as has been the case in France and Germany, that the post-war development of capitalist exploitation has created immigration, twelve million strong, with all its problems. In this country it has to be comprehended before we immigrants discover that there is no space for us in the British workers' organisations and ideas of a separate organisation really start to take a solid foothold.

Interviews with Migrants

'In a few years we will be faced with a shortage of labour, not with a shortage of jobs, we should break away from this artificial segregation of nation from nation . . . who is going to pay for the old age pensioners and social services unless we have an addition to our population, which only immigration can provide in the years to come?'

— James Callaghan,
House of Commons, 19 June 1946

A 45-year old former Ukrainian prisoner of war:

After school I was going home with my friends. We were stopped by the German Gestapo and invited to go along with them to the town to see a film. We accepted and went on their lorry. The Ukrainians were fighting with the Germans against the Russians so we had nothing to fear. However, we never saw the film. In the evening more and more boys and girls were being brought to the collection point. In the morning, without even having the chance to say goodbye to our parents, we were loaded onto a goods train and taken to Germany.

After 24 hours in Germany we were taken to work in a shipyard. There we found over 3,000 other girls, of different nationalities, already working, Poles, Yugoslaves, Italians and Spaniards. We worked for nothing and were made to work very hard. Certainly this was no work for a 14-year-old girl like me who had never worked before. We used to make those big ships. We had to lift by hand those enormous steel panels and put them into position for other girls to attend to the rest. The only men in the yards were the German Civil Supervisors and the Gestapo.

The relationship between us was terrible. The Gestapo would not allow us to speak to our friends and if we stopped or spoke they would come and beat us up.

In the morning we were given a piece of dry bread and a glass of water, one pint of potato soup for lunch with some bread and in the evening we had coffee and one biscuit. One day I was beaten up so badly that they had to take me to hospital. The sores on my neck had become infected and so I had to stay there for sometime.

After the hospital I didn't go back to the shipyards. They took me instead to a farm and there I remained until the end of the war. In 1945 the war was over and I was free again. I had spent the whole of the war period as a forced labourer working for the Germans. I was lucky to have come out of it alive. We were told that the Ukraine was now occupied by the Russians and we didn't want to go back there anymore.

The Canadian and the British Forces who occupied our area organised us into hostels. First we stayed in a Polish Refugee Camp but later we organised our own Ukrainian hostel. It was there that the British came around and proposed to us to join the European Voluntary Workers

Scheme (EVW) and come to work in Britain. Many other people had gone elsewhere, to America, Canada, Australia, but I thought that England was nearer to the Ukraine in case I later cared to go back there.

In 1948 for us refugees the EVW meant that we had to undergo a health check and sign a contract for a year to work in a cotton or wool mill, the coal mines, the brick factories or farms. I was sent to a jute mill near Edinburgh to make sacks. Other conditions were that from our weekly wage of £2.10s, £1.10s would be retained for paying the expenses of the hostel where we were staying and the transportation to and from work. There were also other conditions, such as being single. But that was alright for me.

The position of the Ukrainian prisoner of war was quite different. They were brought over here from Italy in 1947 and kept as prisoners of war until December 1948. After that they were incorporated into the EVW Scheme, for a compulsory period of 3 years. In all that time they were employed in the same type of jobs as we were given, the mills, the mines, the farms. They were given £1 per week as prisoners of war with accommodation

and food provided. This was raised to £3.10s. per week with deductions for food and lodging and transport when they became incorporated into the EVW Scheme. I never heard of any case of wage discrimination against the EVW as the employers were interested only in getting a job done well so it didn't matter whether you were Ukrainian, Yugoslav or British.

For us girls this arrangement was not too strict. Almost all of us had left the hostel long before the year was over, some had gone to other jobs in other cities just as they wished. The reception extended to us girls by our Scottish workmates was really good. They used to bring us food, clothing and always invited us for meals but we could not speak English at all and so we used to refuse and it was all very embarrassing. Later we organised a school and with time we learned the language so we got more involved with the local people. I left the hostel after the year was over, got married to a Ukrainian and have worked and remained in this country ever since.

A 24-year old Sicilian catering worker:

My story is like that of all the others. I left my village mainly because there was no work for me there. I wanted to find a better job. In Sicily everything is controlled by a few who, if it pleases them, can get you a job with one of their friends.

I left Italy and went to search for work in Paris. It was also difficult for us there, so for the first period I had to economise and live on my savings. Then I found a job in a restaurant, the work was hard, from 8 am until 12.30 pm, with three hours' break in the afternoon. For all this I received full board and 200 francs per month. This was six years ago. The working conditions were bad but the atmosphere was kept friendly by the boss who praised us all the time. I was not the only immigrant there. There were Portuguese women and Algerians who were employed to wash up or be porters. I wanted to leave this place and finally got another job, this time in a hotel. There I got to know some French workers. They had better qualified jobs but the work conditions were the same for everyone. The workers were very united, not like here in London. The Confederation General Du Travail (CGT) made sure that our basic rights were respected. No one could have been sacked on the spot. If someone was given employment he could be sacked after the first week, like here in England, simply because the Chef or the Management didn't like him, or because he was not prepared to work as much as expected. The dirtiest jobs were always given to the immigrants from the old French Colonies, people from the Martinique and Algeria, etc. No oppor-

tunities were given to these workers to train for better jobs in the kitchen, so they had to be content to clean and wash up all the time.

Some Parisian friends started talking about the work opportunities in England. There was plenty of work also in France but the wages, I was told, were better in England. In those days England was not in the Common Market. I had to obtain a work permit to be allowed to work here, so I wrote to the Savoy Hotel and immediately they sent me a work contract. For a 48-hour week, with 1½ days off-duty, they were prepared to pay me £23. However I had to find my own accommodation outside the hotel. The job they offered looked better than the one I had, so I thought it would be alright. So in 1971 I arrived in London to work in this hotel.

At the Savoy Hotel the British workers could have been counted on two hands. They all came from Catering Colleges and were completing their training. Everybody else was foreign — European and Asian. The worst jobs were always reserved for the Pakistanis and other Commonwealth immigrants. It was really bad to see these workers clean those enormous saucepans and washing the floors, and the food they were given — rice every day. The really awful thing was the attitude of the other workers in the kitchen towards these coloured people — real racism. And for all they had to endure they received only about £14 gross per week. Then the tax took a large part of that. It really was bad for them. I was getting £14 clear, that was different from what I was told originally, the original contract had not specified how much the tax would be. *Anyway, I had signed the contract and discussing it with the boss would also have resulted in one thing, the sack, and as I had been brought here by him this would have meant being thrown out of the country.* So I kept silent. I had to do overtime all the time to pay for my room and transport. My room was very little and very expensive. I didn't have much money and didn't speak well enough to understand all the conditions imposed by the landlord. So it turned out to be very bad with extra money for the light and gas, but better not talk of these things.

In France we had a threshold agreement every three months which kept our wages up with the cost of living, but there was nothing of the sort over here. I was told by the others that after six months I was to speak to the Grand Chef and see if he agreed to pay me more. The increase is not automatic like in France. Anyway, I went to see the Chef and he gave me £3 more per week. But this didn't change the situation very much. The conditions of work remained the same and I still had to work from noon until 3 pm and from 6 pm until midnight. I still had to work overtime to pay for all my expenses, forgetting about saving.

The situation at the Savoy is so bad that the Sub-Chef used to come around every week and give us £5 if we were prepared to work our day and a half off. We needed the extra money and they desperately needed workers so we accepted it. This went on for a long time, but one day when he came around again all nice and sweet we said no. He didn't like that, reminded us of future rises, difficulties for us foreigners to get other jobs and so on. In the end he sent us to the Grand Chef, who made us line up, then called us one by one and asked individually if we were going to do overtime again. We said no, then he really got mad, reminded us of possible future wage increases, of difficulties for foreigners to get other jobs and, like the other Chef, told us off. So we got our day and a half off-duty back again but what a time we had. We tried to enjoy ourselves but that was very difficult. It was alright when at work, we could speak with the other workers, but on our day off-duty we were all separated in different parts of London among people with whom it was difficult to communicate or get in touch with.

Well, after my contract with the Savoy expired I went to work in a nightclub. I still had to work in the evening but now I had two full days off and got £25 clear a week. The Chef and the other cooks were English but there was a Frenchman and several Spaniards doing portering jobs and the washing up. The British were kind to us in this job but one could, at the same time, feel a division. They were always talking with the Chef, you could feel that they were secure people, very individualistic and didn't care very much about our conditions. I was very friendly with the Spanish immigrants who used to wash the dishes and do all the other cleaning jobs. With these people we started discussing the working conditions. We all were agreed that things were not so good. We were always working and the money was never enough and then there was the British who were always telling us what to do. So one day I had a big discussion with the Chef, confident that all the immigrant workers would support me. We tried to change our situation as second class workers. So we started getting to work late, going slow on the job. The Manager started to come into the kitchen and saw that we were no longer the nice obedient workers we used to be. He then started to watch over us, to find an excuse to sack us. He didn't find any, so the Spaniards got a rise.

People tend to believe that by joining the Union everything will be alright because the Union is strong. But I know, and I have spoken to the representative, that if the Union exists or not, the English official will always turn up in favour of the boss because he says we do not understand the law, or the contract we have signed. We workers have to struggle by ourselves . . . it is the only way. I even

tried to talk with other workers in other hotels and restaurants. Even if they are interested they are afraid, haven't got the time or else have changed jobs. It is very hard and I haven't got much time, but for us it is the only way out.

A 36-year old Spaniard from Galisia:

Every hotel and restaurant has its own wage structure, its own system of exploitation. In restaurants, the basic wage of a waiter goes from £5 to £12 per week. The waiter has to get the order from the client, tell the Chef and bring what he gets back to the client. This situation has given the idea to the Chef that they are the specialists the clients are after and that the waiter only carries out orders. This causes friction. However, as the waiter has to swell his basic wage, he wants to serve as many clients well as is possible in order to get more tips. In trying to achieve this he tries to hurry the Chefs. This infuriates the cooks who start quarrelling and insulting the waiters. Fortunately, for the waiter in England, the clients do not know very much about food so if we are rushed anything goes, but in France . . . !

All the catering industry is characterised by the shortness of time any worker spends in any one job. Despite this, we have made strikes and pickets in London, the people who are aware of their dignity have all been involved, the entire staff of several London restaurants have many times left the kitchen halfway through the evening, leaving clients and bosses shouting after them. We know that we have got to fight by ourselves, too many times we have been let down by the traditional organisations. We have to break the circle around us. Expand our struggle to other hotels, other restaurants. We have to involve all the forces of immigration in our fight and in this we are certain that the British will come over to our side.

A 32-year old Spaniard from Barcelona:

I work at McVitie's, the Biscuit Manufacturers. They employ at their plant in West London a work force of 1,700-2,000 people. Of this work force very few are British. The overwhelming majority are immigrants, from India or Pakistan, most of whom are women. These immigrants are prepared to work harder and produce much more than their British or European immigrant colleagues. Of course other immigrants work in this factory. There is a large contingency from the West Indies, Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and other nations which are less developed than England. The Asians appear to be somewhat afraid of getting involved in discussions or disputes with the bosses and I do not think, as



others do, that they lack a class consciousness. Once they have worked in the factory for sometime they will, I am sure, realise where their real interests lie.

Presently the factory works on a two shift basis with a part-time system operating between shifts. The first shift begins at 7.45 am and ends at 4.45 pm. The part time system then operates from 5 pm until 9.30 pm. At 10 pm, the night shift takes over and continues through the night until 7.45 am the following morning. The interval between shifts is filled in by overtime. This arrangement ensures that machinery is kept going all day and maximum profits are secured for the bosses, who even see that the pastry leftovers are recycled.

Of particular interest in this arrangement is the part-time shift. As I have already said, women, and in particular

Asian women, are over-represented in the factory. Moreover they comprise almost one entire part-time shift staff. Many of them are married and come to work after the housework is complete and their husbands have returned home from work, ready to spend the evening looking after the children during their wives' absence. These women who maintain the part-time shift are obliged, because of family financial requirements, to take a second job to supplement the low wages of their husbands, and in so doing become physically and mentally exhausted. The full-time staff appear to think that they only are the real workers at McVitie's and that the others . . . well just part-timers . . . This alienates the part-timers even more and reduces the bargaining strength that the complete workers' unity would achieve.

I have spoken with some of the part-time women workers. They have been discussing the situation among themselves and with their husbands at home. They all seem to agree that it is about time that they started getting organised, to get more money for the already too long 40-hour week and put an end to overtime and second jobs. I have been discussing the position of the women in the factory with some of my friends, some, especially those who have wives or girlfriends working in this or other factories, agree with me that the position of women is worse than ours. Other men disagree. Let's take the normal shift workers. Men get an average weekly wage of £28 gross, while the women make only £26.60 gross. We cannot live on that money. Knowing this the Supervisors can always rely on us to do overtime. We have to accept to make ends meet. Anyway the women get £1.60 less than the men and they are presently organising themselves in order that for the same job they will get the same rates as the men. The men resent this and, instead of uniting to get an across-the-board increase

from the management, accuse the women of all sorts of things. I am an immigrant worker myself, so to me this doesn't make sense. When I asked my shop steward about it his reply was that, in principle, he agreed with me but in this period the bosses couldn't afford increases for anybody, and so the women better be quiet and wait like everybody else. In the meantime, the women keep doing the most repetitive, monotonous and unrewarding jobs in the factory. They work with machines which operate non-stop and require their constant attention, making it practically impossible to leave them for any reason, for the smallest length of time.

It is the policy of McVitie's gradually to move the women immigrant workers to jobs which were previously filled by men. This represents a big saving to the firm, on the one hand, but worse working conditions for the women, on the other hand. The Irish women reject moves of this sort and complain to the shop steward and even the supervisor, and if they do not get what they want they leave the factory and go elsewhere for a

more humane and certainly better paid job, while the other immigrants are left behind. The Irish immigrant can do this as he speaks English and needs no work permit. The other immigrants don't have this freedom. Also they need every penny they can get so they must stay on and put up with the worsening conditions. Even so, a very large number of workers leave the factory, not even completing the first month of employment, regularly. But it seems that McVitie's are always able to find a similar number of new workers needing money, so they are alright.

In this respect the Union representatives don't seem to be helping the interests of the workers. In fact, the whole union organisation is based on a group of people who decide what to do and in fact seem always to decide nothing and do nothing. This is hardly surprising as all the union activity at McVitie's is surrounded by secrecy. We do not know when they meet, where they meet and in fact who meets with whom. Nobody knows how or when the present shop stewards or convenor were elected.

Grand Metropolitan Ltd and Migrant Labour

Grand Metropolitan Limited is one of the most tangible examples of how a massive economic empire is built out of the exploitation of immigrant labour. This company, which started with the hotel industry, has expanded its own interests to collateral and complementary fields of the catering industry. The group's hotel chain comprises hotels in London and other U.K. cities, as well as overseas in Amsterdam, Brussels, Cannes, Madrid, Monte Carlo, New York, Paris and Rome; also big interests in catering comprising some 500 restaurants and extensive industrial catering; processing and distribution of meat and dairy products both in the UK and abroad; the promotion of leisure time activities, mainly through its subsidiary company Mecca Limited; brewing and distribution through public house outlets acquired with the acquisition of Truman and later Watneys and through the Chef and Brewer chain of licensed premises.

In July 1972 the Group was successful in its bid for the share capital of major UK brewery groups, Watney Mann Limited, which itself had recently acquired the wine and spirits business of International Distillers and Vintners Limited, together with the acquisition, in August 1971, of Brewers, Truman, Hanbury, Buxton & Company Limited. The acquisition of

another brewery company put the Grand Metropolitan among the national leaders in the field with something in excess of 10,000 retail public house outlets and chain of off-licenses. During 1972, A. Williams & Son London Limited and Sloan's Dairies Limited were also acquired. At the end of May 1973 it was announced that Watney Mann had acquired a controlling interest in the West German brewery concern Stern Brauerei Carl Funke.

The logic of this development is the expansion to complementary fields of the original activities. To quote Maxwell Joseph, Chairman of G.M.L. (personal capital invested in the company £5,187,961) 'by combining our food, meat and baking expertise a new capacity is being built up to give an all round supply service to the catering industry'.

Limiting our analysis only to the hotel activities of the G.M.L., what mainly stands out is the level of concentration which the company has reached in this sector. The ownership of several chains of hotel, inns and restaurants among the most important in the country allows the company to cover all levels of demands, and impose, if not a monopoly, certainly a position of oligopoly with all the consequential advantages that this position allows to the few firms involved in controlling the retail prices of the ser-

vices offered.

The recent acquisition by the G.M.L. of the Watney Mann Limited, another economic giant operating in the production and retail of beer, reinforces the trend towards a wider control. It is important to underline that this acquisition has been the most relevant in 1972 in terms of capital outlay and projected returns on investments. This fact is an index which helps us understand the relative importance of the Grand Metropolitan Limited in the context of the national economy.

Referring to the financial year 1972/73 the Grand Metropolitan Limited's turnover was £845,543,000. This places the company among the top fifteen operating in the U.K. and by far the leader in the catering field. The G.M.L. in 1971/72 had a total gross profit of £75,216,000. This represented an increase of 120% over the previous year. In 1972/73 a gross profit of £83,434,000 was made. Only Ford U.K. managed to do better. The greatest part of the group's profit originated from its catering chains, which constitute the pivot of all the G.M.L. activities. These high profits have made possible the attainment of a position of near perfect monopoly in catering and the constant expansion in complementary fields of investment. In this it

elected. All we know, especially us immigrants, is that these 'Gentlemen' relate to us in their usual old-fashioned paternalistic way that has to be heard to be believed. At all times these 'workers' Representatives' are ready to take the side of the company and secure that nothing stands in the way of the smooth continuation of production.

Though all of us pay the union dues, in fact they are deducted together with all the other deductions from our weekly wage by the management, we do not receive membership cards. These, for some unexplained reason, are reserved for a special few. The same blue-eyed boys also receive the union papers. I had occasion last week to have a glimpse of one of these 'information sheets'. It related the election of a beauty queen, a coach trip to the seaside by another branch. All articles were on that level, while there was no reference to the conditions of the workers or any political viewpoint. I was told to be careful and not to let the supervisor see me reading it. I wonder why he should bother! Of course papers like the *Sun* or the *News*

of the World are widely circulated, but any paper remotely interested in workers' conditions or objectives is immediately stamped upon and the reader is reprimanded and told not to do it again.

The main offender responsible for this situation is without doubt the Union's 'No. 1. Convenor'. Again nobody knows how he got his job or what his job really is. All we know is that he goes around the factory all day long making sure — well just making sure. He is the symbol of all the things which stand in the way of a successful workers' organisation in the factory.

Despite these obstacles the night shift workers have gained a victory over management. This dispute went on for months and it was about the Sunday night shift. The workers were paid 100% over the normal rate when they started work at 10 pm on Sunday night, but at midnight, as it had become Monday, the normal miserable rate was resumed. The struggle which resulted was finally solved by the management who completely ended the Sunday night shift. This was obviously a victory for us, but the

management hit back by convincing a small group of 'innocent' maintenance workers to man the machines during the Sunday night in order to have them ready for the morning shift. They were given the normal rate of pay for this. Now the Engineers are also involved in a dispute. They want their yearly holiday to be extended from three to four weeks per annum. They are supported in this by their union but when they win, their victory will represent a new point of wider confrontation for all the workers in the factory, even if presently the Engineers are only fighting for the advancement of their own.

A group of workers are trying to organise a general meeting in the factory to discuss all the issues. There are lots of difficulties in our way: the division between English-speaking workers and other nationality groups, the division between men and women, the reactionary partnership of the union with management and many other problems. But we must work towards our unity and organisation which alone can help to halt and reverse our present oppression by the bosses.

External Sales and Trading Profit (Analysis by Activity)

1973 1972

	External Sales £000	Trading Profit £000	External Sales £000	Trading Profit £000
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a) Hotels, Entertainment, Eating and Public Houses	247,455	35,154	213,292	30,950
b) Multinational Interests & Food	181,027	9,869	154,561	9,134
c) Brewing & Distribution	131,940	16,850	115,101	16,526
d) Wines & Spirits	146,224	16,758	134,007	14,176
e) Betting & Gaming	138,888	4,803	140,821	4,430
TOTAL	845,534	83,434	757,782	75,216

Multi National Interests

1973 1972

	External Sales £000	Trading Profit £000	External Sales £000	Trading Profit £000
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U.K. & Eire	762,636	76,007	703,197	69,635
Continent of Europe	44,782	3,636	27,085	1,851
North America	12,922	2,850	1,328	3,066
Australia	7,873	515	4,873	432
Africa	17,321	426	11,299	232
TOTAL	845,534	83,434	757,782	75,216

may be helpful to look at the distribution of financial turnover related to the various sectors of activity for the financial year 1972/73.

From the above data we can see that though the contribution of the catering sector to the total company's turnover has fallen to 29% its profit contribution still remains at 42% of the company's total profits. Over 50% of the group's

94,000 employees are engaged in the catering sector and it is not far from the truth to say that exorbitant profits are a direct result of the company's labour policy which recruits 60% of its traditionally low standard of qualification work-force, required in the catering industry, from countries like Spain, Morocco, Portugal, Greece and Turkey. Immigrant labourers, with their miserable wages,

appear irrefutably to be the main reason behind the extraordinary profits made by G.M.L., which the group has later channelled to new areas of production, i.e. the brewing concern with its sophisticated manner of production requiring a high level of capital investment with consequent saving on skilled British manpower expenses.

It is not out of place to talk here about the countries of origin of these immigrant workers. In these countries the ruling classes have been unable to create new places of employment to avoid this process of migration and have, as a result, denied to their people even the most elementary freedom. In this process of oppression they are helped by the British companies and government, which have everything to gain from the continuation of such a situation. Firstly because the British capitalist needs to have available in Britain a cheap work-force, easily blackmailed and disorganised, from which to obtain huge profits and secondly because this can allow Britain to invest with safety in the countries which export immigrants, where the working class is kept under control by the hands of state police, South Africa, Portugal, etc. It follows that British democracy has its foundations in fascist regimes of the Mediterranean and third world countries.

The high profits and the great national and international expansion of Grand Metropolitan Limited. 'Its healthy development' as it has been called by the *Financial Times* has got one, certainly not very imaginative, main explanation: the abundant and cheap work of the immigrants.

Murder Trial in Dominica

In the 305 square mile, agriculture-based English-speaking island of Dominica, Desmond Trotter (21) and Roy Mason (22) are to face trial in October on a charge of murdering a white American tourist.

The arrest is set against a background of protest and demonstrations since the late 1960s in condemnation of the 14-year-old ruling Labour Government's unconcern about those social and economic ills that have historically plagued the region as a whole: foreign penetration of the economy; a wide and ever-increasing gap between a tiny middle class and the masses of suffering poor; criminally low wages; feudal conditions of work and land tenure; a 40 per cent level of unemployment; inadequate and irrelevant education; unbalanced diet and poor sanitation; national frustration, and other resultant mental disorders.

An on-the-spot investigation has confirmed that popular opposition to the Government is spearheaded by the **MOVEMENT FOR A NEW DOMINICA** to which brothers Trotter and Mason are closely linked. They both have a history of harassment and threats to their lives by law enforcement agencies; they are presently victims of a vicious campaign of misinformation, launched by the Establishment through its media, aimed at sentencing the brothers before the hearing.

Clearly this is a political trial. As we go to press Mr. Alleyne Q.C., representing both defendants, has been assassinated.

The root of the murder trial rests in the contemporary mass resistance against the black political (mis)-leadership in Dominica, and the fierce determination of the regime to remain entrenched at whatever cost. Replacement of whites by blacks in terms of constitutional change from direct political control by Britain (via inclusion in an ill-fated federation) to internal self-government, a transition that took place in the 1950s/'60s, has not been associated with corresponding change in the standard of life of the vast majority of the population. While political leaders and their middle-class allies luxuriate in relative economic privilege, 60 per cent of the people have weltered in the heat of economic misery, social degradation and political exclusion.

In the late 1960s the masses said: **ENOUGH!** And a cry that echoed in every nook and cranny of the island obtained spontaneous articulation by a community of youth who, schooled on a promise that education guaranteed a better and fuller life, now found themselves face to face with a future steeped in unemployment and despair. Thus in 1968 emerged a 'Black Power' movement, sister to similar motivated struggles against oppression and exploitation in other regions of the Black World. The movement and its literary organ, *Black Cry*, centred around Desmond Trotter, one of the brothers now on trial.

The Government took the offensive. Focussing on the rioting, burning and looting which accompanied Black American political activity in the late 1960s, it utilized media facilities in cultivating for the Movement an image of senseless violence and destruction. Then followed police harassment of unemployed youth, unprovoked acts of police brutality against radical youth and official denunciation of student political activity.

Establishment action went largely unnoticed. Popular support of progressive elements was not forthcoming because

Only change will do

The love of the home I left
is the art of the impossible;
to keep loving it is easier
than going straight back to it.

Andrew Salkey

although 'Black Power' is sound in objective, the name did not ring acceptance in the ears of an as-yet-politically-unaware mass of blacks who not only composed 99 per cent of the national population, but as well identified with black administrators in leadership positions in the Government, Civil Service, Teaching Service, Police, Judiciary, Prisons and other State institutions. The reality of class conflict within the local black presence and the situation of the economy on the fringes of the international capitalist network did not sufficiently emerge. Moreover, non-conformist behaviour of marginal youth elements, such as smoking marijuana, idling on street corners and provoking white tourists, served to alienate significant sections of the oppressed classes.

1972 marked a turning point in the life of the 'Black Power' movement in the island. Privately concentrating on ideological clarification and organisational method, and publicly airing both Movement deficiencies and the urgent need for a new image that would facilitate initial thrust into the depressed areas of the country, it demonstrated scope and intent in its official adoption of the name, Movement for a New Dominica (MND). Theoretical guidelines, emanating from critical and self-critical analysis of the objective situation, were articulated at meetings, conferences and the as-yet-

unstifled Radio Dominica, and set out in *Twaway*, MND's monthly publication. Strategy and tactics found concrete expression in the initiation of work in the community. To all this Brother Trotter and, at a later stage, Brother Mason stood unshakably committed.

In the meantime the agricultural workers had come of age. In July of that year field labourers at Castle Bruce, a plantation then owned by Britain-based multi-national, multi-faceted Commonwealth Development Corporation, defied the Corporation's attempt to retrench the labour force, struck work, and organised with a view to taking over the estate and collectivising production.

So calculated a threat to the basis of the economic system drove the propertied class to the heights of desperation. Its administrative arm, the Government, charged the Castle Bruce workers with communist designs, and identified the Black Movement as 'conspirators'. Supportive messages from North America-based Dominican groups sympathetic to fundamental social change, and MND's publication in November 1972 of a pamphlet embracing the position taken at Castle Bruce multiplied the concern of the ruling interests. That same month a legitimate demonstration co-organised by MND in protest against Government's misuse of public revenues was disbanded by police; students were threatened with expulsion for associating with supposedly subversive, that is, 'Black Power' elements; and police harassment and brutality of radical youth escalated. Brother Trotter was himself reserved for special treatment. Suspended from his Civil Service job, transferred to another department, his life consistently threatened by police, arrested on suspicion of illegal possession of explosives, his commitment has remained unflinching.

And then came June 1972. That month a national strike that nearly crippled the already collapsing economy of the island

provoked the declaration of a state of emergency that lasted for two months. The origins of the strike lay in dissatisfaction by the Civil Service Association with the Government's handling of an issue that culminated in the humiliating dismissal of one of its members. Sister unions, including ironically even the Employers' Association, struck in solidarity.

Mysteriously the Government imagined that the strike was a convenient cover for a planned overthrow of the regime by a 'Third Force'. In MND, the Government saw that 'Third Force'; regarded in a capacity second to the ruling Labour regime has been the largely discredited, urban-based Dominica Freedom Party. Castro-type guerillas, the Government told the national on radio, were operating in the island. In confirmation they testified to having discovered concealed in the forests, a shack, two rounds of used 0.22 cartridges and a narrow track leading down to a stream - things that amount to the stock-in-trade of any game-hunter.

The ensuing months told of no end to political bombardment of MND, and harassment and brutality of militant youth thought to be anti-government and on the side of the forces calling for revolutionary transformation of society. Brothers were picked up in the streets, taken to Central Police Station, thrown into cells, beaten and, without charge, released. Over-regular patrolling by police ensured the existence in name only of *Four Corners*, a four-street intersection that served as political information centre for the politically-thinking urban youth.

Driven from *Four Corners*, and recognising the importance of independent subsistence in revolutionary activity, small groups abandoned the city for the countryside. They established themselves legitimately on small patches of land, cultivated provisions and vegetables, shared a communal way of life and forged sound relations with neighbouring peasants as a precondition for political mobilisation.

That quality of activity, although consistent with the Government's guiding principle for 1974 - Agriculture Year - that a determined assault must be made on the land, was deemed unwelcome by the power structure. Police harassment thus assumed a new geographical thrust. On occasion tomato seedlings have been uprooted, one or two guns seized, and the charge made that agricultural holdings occupied on that basis represent no more than pretexts for illegal cultivation of marijuana and training in guerilla warfare. Once held on suspicion of marijuana possession, Brother Trotter is now awaiting trial for illegal possession of a gun.

At Carnival celebrations in February 1974 the climax came. On the evening of the 24th two young American white tourists, evidently consumers of illegal drugs, were severely beaten and their

bodies slashed while camping near the village of Marigot. On the following night, in the capital city of Roseau, another tourist, this time an old male white American was shot. Taken to hospital and lightly treated from 10.30 to 10.45 p.m., he was not seriously attended to until 7.30 the following morning. He died.

The Establishment seized the time. In total disregard of incidents in which black people were the recipients of injury in one form or another, the Government, through their mouth-piece the Deputy Premier, placed responsibility for the attacks on the tourists on 'a few degenerate leaders who see themselves as the architects of a new society projecting new standards'. Operating on the backward assumption that tourism holds the key to the doors of economic development, the Deputy Premier warned that 'more effective measures will later be introduced to stamp out the menace that threatens our progress and development'. That was the message of a man who had publicly stated sometime earlier that elements opposed to Government policies 'should be burnt like in the old days when they burnt the witches'.

In Roseau an unofficial state of emergency went into immediate effect. The target was once again the radical youth. *Twavay* reported: Every evening one can see many policemen travelling in groups with very long and thick clubs, tape recorders and other equipment harassing individuals. Young people were arrested on suspicion of arms possession; homes have been indiscriminately searched; brothers have unprovoked been taken in for questioning, unnecessarily chased off the streets, and prevented from sitting outside on the steps of their own homes. *Four Corners*, centred about Brother Mason's home and a stone's throw from Brother Trotter's, was virtually under siege.

Two weeks later, the village of Grandbay erupted. Grinding under the weight of a feudal relationship that brought millions of dollars to Syrian-owner Nassief and deprivation and misery to the workers on the nearby Geneva plantation, the villagers at Grandbay drove the managers off the estate, took it over, slaughtered stock and distributed meat among the people, and barricaded themselves against police reinforcement from outside. In Roseau, a few miles away, a Nassief-owned business place went up in flames.

The Government tied the Grandbay struggle closely to revolutionary thought emerging from MND, summed up in the principle that land should at all times be owned and controlled by those who work it. More than that. The intimate contact that had been forged between some cadres guided by Brother Trotter and other radical urban elements and progressive youth at Grandbay was used to establish a more direct, concrete linkage between the

Movement and the Grandbay workers.

Grandbay was placed under official emergency. Police were concentrated there, and property-owning volunteers were recruited into a rural constabulary with license to kill. Secret police became institutionlized. A number of Grandbay youth were arrested and illegally held in detention. On 6 May, amidst these circumstances, Brothers Trotter and Mason were officially charged with murder.

That is the political background of the case: The Dominica ruling classes using their agents, the Labour Government, in a desperate effort to stem the tide at whatever cost of forces dedicated to overthrowing conditions of oppression and exploitation, in pursuit of a richer and fuller life for all the people of Dominica. The Prosecution is yet to present credible evidence in support of their charge. But in the meantime two freedom fighters, Desmond (21) and Roy (22), remain on remand in a prison noted for primitive facilities and intolerable conditions. All progressive forces in and out of Dominica must do what must be done to secure their unconditional immediate release!

Defence Committee for Political Prisoners in Dominica, 24 June 1974. For further information write to us at 522 W. 112 St., Apartment 23, New York, N.Y. 10025. (Tel. 212-850-5130), or Bernard Wiltshire, London. (Tel. 01-739-4996).

You can help by sending:

1. Financial contributions, made out to: Dominicans In Support Of Progress, Apt. No. 23, 522 West 112th St., New York, N.Y. 10025.

2. Messages of protest to the Government of Dominica, via Minister of Home Affairs, Government Headquarters, Kennedy Avenue, Roseau, Dominica, West Indies.

3. Letters to the Editors of the following newspapers: (i) *Twavay*, 6 Canal Lane, Goodwill, Dominica, W.I. (ii) *New Chronicle*, 7 Queen Mary St., Roseau, Dominica, W.I. (iii) *Wahseen*, c/o Daniel Cauderion, 8 Castle, Roseau, Dominica, W.I. (iv) *Star*, 26 Bath Road, Roseau, Dominica, W.I. (v) *Educator*, 60 Queen Mary St., Roseau, Dominica, W.I.

4. Statements of solidarity with the Movement for a New Dominica in general and the political brother prisoners in particular, addressed to (i) Movement for a New Dominica, 6 Canal Lane, Goodwill, Dominica, W.I. (ii) Radio Dominica, Victoria St., Roseau, Dominica, W.I. (iii) Radio Antilles, Plymouth, Montserrat, W.I. (iv) Radio AKD, St. Johns, Antigua, W.I.

Important note: a copy of all messages, letters and statements should be sent to (i) Movement for a New Dominica and (ii) Radio Antilles. Only in this way can publicity be guaranteed.

Black Nurses

Sir,

The spectre of Blacks constituting an underclass in the work force, to whom whites could bequeath positions considered beneath them, has become a recurring theme in the history of the Black labour movement in America. The article, 'Black Women and Nursing' in your last issue of *Race Today* underscores through yet another instance the dynamics of this process at work in the west.

The continuing victimization of Black women who are deliberately railroaded into low-paying, non-advancement positions seems to point up a critical need for Black women nurses to organize themselves collectively. For the economic exploitation of Black women has always been a much graver issue than the white feminist movement would generally allow. That is, while half the white population, i.e. white males, is in many cases comfortably engaged in the production process, the Black woman has no such male buffer to ease the impact of her material deprivation and inferior position. The issue of agency nursing thus emphasized in a particularly lucid manner the plight of Black women forced to work, but with the added responsibility of raising a family. Many are then inclined towards Agency work with its more flexible schedule. It is a commonplace in any endeavour that those with the least status in society have the least options in life. Thus for white women's groups to attack agency nursing as was discussed in this article is an illuminating case of racism at its most bitter. But this fact again points to the vacuum of Black political structure to combat this and other invidious forms of white working-class prejudice.

I would have liked to see in this article more attention given to presenting the attitudes of the Black women interviewed about ways and means of remedying their grievances. Had there actually been attempts by Black nurses to organize themselves in order to confront the specific problems of the immigrant nurse, such as mistreatment, discrimination, educational qualifications. And if not, why? Obviously, to the degree that Black and other coloured women might be seen as posing a threat to the limited number of positions held principally by white nurses in the higher categories of the profession, their goals cannot be achieved without struggle. Black workers will actually have to take the initiative for demanding these innovations, backing up their demands with well-organized direct action. And if they find that their allies are a paltry few, one need only keep in mind that significant social change has never been dependent totally upon sheer numbers, but on the relationship of forces in the political arena. And with Black and other immigrant nurses tearing

up the bottom, it won't be just the privileged position of some white nurses in jeopardy — but the whole nursing system at stake.

Connie Hilliard

Sisters,

The article 'Black Women & Nursing: A Job Like Any Other', was well appreciated by Black Peoples Freedom Movement.

It is part of our duty to expose exploitation, whatever shape it might take, in order to bring about changes.

In one section of the article, several reasons were given as to why so many Black Women took Nursing as a field of employment. Quite a few of the reasons were centred around Black Women wanting to serve others. Here we disagree because Black People — Black women — had been serving other people for hundreds of years. Black Women wanted a job which could be respected and Nursing was the only job available at that time — it was a job with a future. Now you find that some Black Women are disillusioned with nursing. Getting past SEN and SRN has become an impossibility and now nursing is looked on, as you called it, 'a job like any other'.

We can see that Agency Nursing has its advantages when you are a mother, as the article points out. The underpayment of the Agency Nurses has got to be brought to light; eg. you work through the Agency. The Agency takes a commission — you are not aware of the amount that is taken — hence you are not aware of the amount that you earn.

Therefore you are paying for the privilege of looking after your child/children.

On the issue of the Union COHSE, from the article it would seem as if the Agency Nurses have taken a stand against the NHS Nurses. In fact you are doing just what the bureaucratically organised union wants you to do.

Is it not possible to get NHS Nurses together with Agency Nurses as well as other Hospital workers — this would give you a better fight against COHSE?

We have not heard a great deal about the Black Women's Group. Could you send us some information on the group?

Sir,

After reading the article in *Race Today*, 'Black Women and Nursing: A Job Like Any Other', I am writing about an incident that happened to me.

I want to make nursing a career but am unable to do so. I recently started a job in a nursing home working at nights, and between myself and a nursing auxiliary we have to look after 57 patients. Besides this the matron wants me to do non-nursing jobs like emptying dustbins, cleaning ashtrays and washing patients' clothes. Although I refuse to do these jobs, my career is in danger because she

can give me the sack when she likes. Because of these conditions I am forced to go back to doing agency nursing there. I achieve a greater freedom as a worker. On the other hand, agency nursing places my interest in career nursing at risk.

Your point on agency nursing states what our position is and the demand that we be isolated as scabs comes from those who know a lot and understand little.

Mrs. D.

Sir,

The nurses' struggle is a very important milestone, not only in the life of the NHS, but in the history of the power of women. Many lessons may be learnt from the hospital workers' organisation and militancy, but one of the most refreshing things which has emerged from their experience stems from the split caused by the conflicting strategies of the various trade unions involved. This alone could have caused the collapse of many other industrial disputes, but in spite of, or maybe because of this, there has developed a unity of hospital workers which has cut across the union barriers. A network of communications, which has been helped by the women's movement and other women's groups, has been established



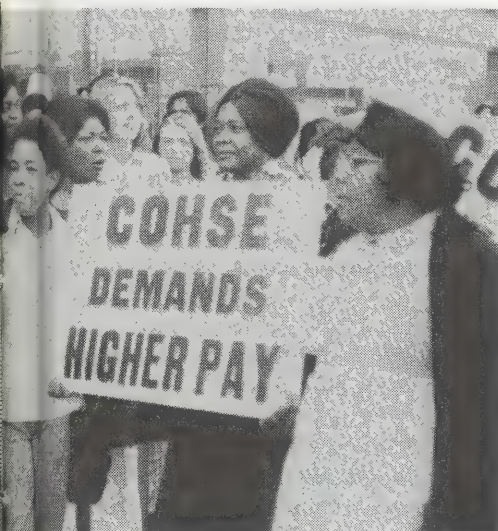
between hospital workers throughout the country. When this particular struggle has been won, these links will remain.

As the struggle moves on, the NHS nurses must reject their unions' call for a ban on working with agency nurses, but rather they should unite with them to ban working under present conditions and pay scales. The common plight of all nurses is clear to themselves, if not to their trade unions, both have been exploited to the extent of being used virtually as slave labour during their training period. They owe the NHS nothing. Many agency nurses are forced into waged labour at night, so that they might do similar unwaged work during the day, reproducing and repairing themselves and their families for capital.

The excellent article on Black Nurses not only highlighted the sexist, racist, hierarchical structure of the hospital

community, which is designed to maintain a division of labour, in order to keep wages low and to deter the most militant of workers from action, but it made the parallel between the hospital worker's waged work and the unwaged work of the housewife and mother even more obvious. All women have gained in strength by the hospital worker's example, we are all exploited but some to a higher degree than others. It is necessary for housewives, isolated in their labour, to see other housewives, in the form of hospital workers, successfully fighting for a demand which all women need. Who would have thought a year ago some of the most oppressed of female workers would be showing women the way of breaking the blackmail which is held over us and held over all service workers?

Thanks mainly to our black sisters, the myth that nursing is a profession or a vocation has been broken. They, like the rest of us, are only working for the money and their work is waged housework. Because women do unwaged housework in the home — some say it is for love — it seems inevitable that work is 'women's work' paid at 'women's rates'. In the nurses' struggle this exploitation of women's labour can be broken by de-



manding wages for housework in addition to their other demands.

Sisters, you have the support and backing of the women's movement, as given in their resolution at the National Women's Liberation Conference in Edinburgh! And, I believe, you also have the support of other women, for your struggle. We all need wages for housework to free us from this 'women's work'.

Jenny Lister
Power of Women Collective

Sir,

I have read last month's issue of *Race Today* and there are a few remarks I would like to make. I did agency nursing for two years. Although I knew I was being exploited by the agency, I continued working for it because it was a lesser degree of exploitation than in the NHS and it gave me a greater degree of

independence. In the NHS I found I was being used by the powers that be. For example, if there was no sister or SRN on the ward, I was used as such, and when it suited them I was the most junior nurse.

One of my most traumatic experiences in nursing was after working for a Borough Council as a nursery nurse. I then returned to the NHS and found that my pay was decreased to that of a first year nurse. When I questioned this I was told that it was so because I was not an employee of the NHS for over a year. Well I was not satisfied with this so I pursued the matter and wrote to the nurse's magazine — and was informed that the Hospital was quite right. Anyway, the Hospital admitted they were wrong because I am not one to give up easily and I was repaid and put on my right income. I have now left the NHS to work as a clerk because I was disillusioned by the NHS in general.

Marna Dove

Sir,

I was very pleased to see an article about black women in *Race Today*. I am a black woman who always thinks of the problems we have and which are never revealed. Most black women have been exploited in all our working capacities and I think it is about time we had more black nurses as matrons in the hospitals.

Being a black nurse is the most natural thing for black women because of our cultural backgrounds. So why isn't there more promotion for them in this field?

I am sure that your issue on the Asian women will help more women to become more aware of their rights.

Mavis Clark

Sir,

We are a group of white student nurses in a London hospital and wish to respond to the article in *Race Today*, 'Black Women and Nursing: A Job Like Any Other'.

We disagree strongly that only immigrant nurses are treated badly. Most of us have had these same experiences in spite of the fact that we are English. We don't think that it is true to assume that these experiences the black nurses wrote about in the article are unique to them. It's not because of their colour but because the nursing profession just treats us that way.

We do agree that nursing is 'women's work' but all women nurses are treated that way. It has got nothing to do with the fact that some nurses are immigrants so therefore it is wrong to believe that only black nurses are treated badly as compared to white nurses. We are all treated badly.

We agree with the statement in the article stating that 'during the last twenty years the class composition of nurses has changed'. Some of us think that it is because most nurses are working class that we are treated the way we are within the nursing profession.

Student Nurses

Asian Workers

Sir,

In your July issue reference is made to an incident concerning membership of this Union. The facts as reported are not correct. It would appear that the person responsible for the article is not himself conversant with Statutory Instruments and the Counter-Inflation legislation bequeathed by the Tory Government, nor normal industrial negotiations, and certainly not with the national agreements in operation within the Carpet Industry.

There is a basic minimum rate of weekly earnings, plus a Cost of Living Bonus which serves as a base for all piece work earnings. It is a fact that this exceeds the figures quoted in your article. Overtime rates are paid additionally in accordance with national agreements. A threshold agreement operates which has given all workers a further £2 since the dispute between the members and the firm. All this adds up to more than what was demanded by the few Asian workers concerned.

Overtime can be curtailed to less than what was demanded, again by national agreement, but the men concerned refused to operate a normal shift system, and chose instead to demand a basic hourly rate which if conceded by the firm, would have paid the men concerned more than local indigenous workers who happen to be white. The 1968 Race Relations Act can operate two ways of course, as your writer will no doubt be aware.

What is reasonable? A demand that the men in dispute should continue to be paid for all the hours they refused to work, whilst other members, who elected to ignore the short service newcomers and continued working, only received normal earnings. What is reasonable? That members should expect support, after they have rejected their own National Executive Committee, which, incidentally, includes coloured people, and their advice that normal procedures which have meant higher earnings than average in the Carpet Industry, in fact 10th from the top in the league covering 85 industries.

In short, your article serves only to illustrate the willingness of certain so-called radical intellectuals, to use minority groups and their associations as platforms for personal ideologies.

Finally, it might be noted that Lord Boyle of Wandsworth [sic] is the Chairman of the local Race Relations Conciliation Committee, and not as stated in your misleading article.

J. Ashton, President
Northern Carpet Trades' Union

Next month's Backlash will focus around the supplement on European Immigrant Workers. We will also continue the debate on Black Nurses and Asian workers. The magazine welcomes your contribution.

REVIEWS

Play Mas by Mustapha Matura
Royal Court Theatre

Play Mas has had a successful run at the Royal Court Theatre. Although the title suggests a dramatisation of Trinidad Carnival, the annual pre-Lenten street festival, the play is nothing of the kind.

(To playmas is to be an active participant in the Carnival festival.) In fact the author Mustapha Matura, a Trinidadian of Indian descent, is seeking to evoke in comedy, two distinct moments in the history of Trinidad & Tobago, which are distinguishable by the intensity of political and social activity, as the society leapt from one stage of economic, social and political development to another. The

idea of a large tailoring establishment in which he is going to cater for gentlemen. Samuel is uncertain of the future and to that extent does he substitute Gookool's future for his own. Gookool's mother has other ideas and is fighting a rearguard action to win. She wants Gokool to take 'a nice Indian girl for his wife' and Samuel is lending support. To advance their respective ideals — essentially the ideals of two worlds in conflict — both Gokool and his mother will be subservient to the English colonial master: Gokool's mother will dominate the African apprentice, threaten to expose the unemployed street hustler's affair with a married woman.

All these deeply personal aspirations



old order is dead and the new is in the process of finding and establishing itself. The social self is in turmoil, old ideas are mercilessly challenged, even ruthlessly trampled upon. *Play Mas* seeks to capture these two distinct historical moments in successive acts. The first is set around 1956. The author chooses as a social setting, a tailor's shop; it is never clear whether in an urban or rural area.

(A tailor's shop and a barber saloon in Trinidad society act as focal points from which local communities and the national society are constantly monitored and discussed. Discussions range from who is sleeping with whom to the most far reaching political and philosophical questions of the day. Only males participate.)

The Indian tailor, Gokool, and his African apprentice, Samuel, are restless personalities bound together literally by needle and thread. They are in the process of intense changes within the womb of Gokool's mother. Gokool is clear what he wants to be. He is dominated by the

and hopes will be realised or not according to the dictates of the larger movement of a society in transition from British colonialism to American imperialism. That movement will claim the life of Gokool's mother and as Gokool is ejected from his mother's womb, he is unable to hold his own by the larger society. He simply drifts along. Samuel's emergence takes on a more sinister reality as Act II will reveal.

These are serious questions as they posed themselves in the 1956 period. The race conflict, the generation conflict, the man/woman conflict are exposed with a brutality and the comic form softens the blows. What has all this to do with Carnival? Nothing. Playing Mas? Nothing. Yet the author intervenes with Carnival which hangs like a limpet to these fierce and serious turn of events. Consequently the author threatens, only threatens, a serious treatment of explosive material, finally receding into something approaching a tourist travelogue.

Act II is set around 1970. The forces which were emerging in 1956 have in the intervening years coalesced into a hardened middle class reign. By 1970 new passions and forces are challenging black middle class rule. The society is again in turmoil. The politician who agitated against the oil companies in 1956 is now the Prime Minister. Samuel, one-time apprentice and fired because he attended a political meeting became a convert of the leader figure. He has been repaid for being a faithful follower. He is now chief of Police.

Gokool is vulnerable without his mother's constant vigilance. Caught between two worlds, he is pounced on by his former apprentice to provide information about the guerillas in the hills. Samuel knows the traditional social significance of the tailor shop. He turns it into a weapon. Gokool submits. He is overawed by Samuel's plush office. It is the new world in which Samuel struts about the office extolling the virtues of capitalist development of which he is the guardian, and in words handed down from Chuck, the CIA agent.

Again Matura threatens seriousness, only to subvert it by stubbornly clinging to his obsession with Carnival. The Carnival scenes are a vulgar intrusion. The presence of grinning steelband's men on stage during the interval confirms the tourist-oriented tendency. A fine and sensitive portrayal of Gokool by Stephen Kalipha rescues the play for a good night's entertainment for everyone.

Darcus Howe

Black Slaves in Britain

F.O. Shyllon

OUP for IRR. 1974. £4.50.

Over the last three centuries two myths concerning Britain and the slave trade have enjoyed popular currency. The first is that abolition of slavery resulted from the wave of humanitarian and charitable feelings current in the late 18th and early 19th centuries; the second embodies the belief that Lord Mansfield's Judgement in 1772 abolished slavery in Britain.

In his sentimental and in many ways irresponsible book, *The British Anti-Slavery Movement*, Sir Reginald Coupland blandly states: The Somerset Case (Lord Mansfield's Judgement, 1772) marks the beginning of the end of slavery throughout the British Empire. For behind the legal judgement lays the moral judgement. Page after page of historical imagination rather than historical fact is used to show that the abolition of slavery by Britain was a great act of charity and humanity uninfluenced by economic considerations.

In response to the first and certainly

more important myth, Eric Williams in his celebrated book, *Capitalism and Slavery*, demolished the Coupland doctrine on abolition by giving a detailed account of how economic and not humanitarian reasons led to abolition. Although more concerned with documenting the history of the Haitian Slave Revolution and the rise of Toussaint L'Ouverture, C.L.R. James in *The Black Jacobins* also suggested that abolition was an economic necessity rather than a moral imperative. This view, after much debate, is now accepted in many historical and sociological circles.

The second myth, however, has not received so much attention. For this reason and out of a desire to put the record right a new black author, F.O. Shyllon, takes this myth as a starting point for his historically detailed book: *Black Slaves in Britain*. Right from the outset Shyllon declares his substantive and methodological intentions: Granville Sharp is the unsung hero of the Somerset Case. Using his papers, the reports of the proceedings in the newspapers and periodicals of the time, the record of the Court in the Public Record Office, and articles and tracts written at the time, I have separated myth from fact. This study is the story of a man who challenged single-handed the accepted morality and inhumanity of the age which believed that 'Blacks are Property'.

This study makes no concession to the fiction called the historian's 'sympathetic imagination'. For too long British historians (who should know better) have used too much imagination and too little sympathy when writing about Africa, Africans, and people of African ancestry.

After this statement, which is refreshing to find on a subject so peppered with liberal explanations and guilt-inspired descriptions, Shyllon proceeds to develop his argument. He offers a brief and somewhat inadequate account of the history of the British slave trade, tracing it back to October 1562 when John Hawkins of Plymouth 'passed . . . to the coast of Guinea . . . where he stayed sometime. got into his possession, partly by the sword and partly by other means, at least 300 Africans.' This trade continued for several decades; but by 1596, during the reign of Elizabeth, the number of black slaves in Britain, like Blacks today, were considered a 'problem'. It was thought that they threatened the purity of the English blood (whilst in bondage!) and the welfare of English servants. Consequently in that year the first of the Great White Mothers proclaimed that it was her 'pleasure . . . that those kinde of people should be sent forthe of the lande . . . the air of England was apparently too pure for 'those kinde of people' to breathe.

With Cromwell's capture of Jamaica from the Spaniards in 1655, the end of the Civil War, the Restoration, and, finally, the monopoly to supply Spain with African slaves under the Asiento of 1713, the purity of the national blood stream could not be maintained. 'More and more

Britons began to bring into Britain their black body-servants from the West Indies and America until by 1772 there were thousands (approximately 15,000) of black folk in Britain'. Used as 'pets' and 'servants', blacks served as an 'index of rank', and it is therefore with no surprise that we find that Pushkin's great-grandfather was 'the son of a reigning African princeling', that the Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Kingston (Sambo), Sir Joshua Reynolds, Lord Mansfield himself (Dido, the black daughter of Sir John Lindsay), the Duke of Montague (Ignatius Sancho and Dr. Johnson (Francis Barber) all possessed like the Marchallin in Richard Strauss's comic opera *Rosenkavalier* a black boy or girl as a servant or 'plaything'.

Instead of plunging immediately into the restoring of Granville Sharp's reputation as the chief pioneer of the abolition movement, Shyllon could have spent profitably more time outlining the social and economic history of the 18th century; the institution of slavery; the economic dependence of Britain on both the slave trade and the ignoble wealth produced from the colonies; the social psychological, political and economic roots of racism; and the importance of racist ideologies in both justifying and maintaining what Kenneth Stamp calls 'the peculiar institution'.

From a purely myth-demolishing point of view Shyllon's book, is an important contribution to some of the black literature on slavery already cited. Skillfully, he follows Granville Sharp's abolitionist's career through the Jonathan Strong, John Hylas, Thomas Lewis, and James Somerset cases. He shows how the Yorke and Talbot private agreement in 1729, thus neither *obiter dicta* nor *ratio decidendi*, had formed the cornerstone of judicial decisions on slaves in Britain. The joint opinion that slaves did not become free on coming to England or on baptism, and that any master could compel his slave to return with him to the West Indies or America was the one tested in the Somerset case. It is Shyllon's reconstruction and interpretation of this historical case together with his account of how Sir William Blackstone 'cooked' the second and subsequent editions of his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* to satisfy the legal idiosyncrasies, and racial prejudices of his 'mentor', 'friend' and 'patron' Lord Mansfield, that makes *Black Slaves in Britain* well worth reading.

Although the author tends to fall into the trap, like so many historians in the Carlyle tradition, of the 'Great men' interpretation of history, of reducing historical explanation to the personality of individuals, he does, however, offer four reasons for Mansfield's vacillation in pronouncing judgement: personal weakness, economic and commercial (the West Indian interests), his personal belief that blacks were property, and,

lastly out of professional considerations for his colleagues Yorke and Talbot to whom 'he owed his meteoric rise at the bar'. Readers with more sociological and political interests than historical will find these reasons somewhat shallow, as apart from the second and third there is no account of the political, social, and economic upheaval at the time, the institutional aspects of colonialism and imperialism, colonial and metropolitan relations, the breakup of a feudal economy, and the subsequent changeover from an agrarian based to an industrial based society. All these factors, I would suggest,

had a direct bearing on Mansfield's procrastination and eventual judgement that 'a foreigner [slave] cannot be imprisoned here on the authority of any law existing in his own country'. This as Shyllon asserts is something quite different from either abolishing slavery in Britain or a marking, to use Couplands' words, 'the beginning of the end of slavery throughout the British Empire'.

To drive the wedge firmly home, Shyllon goes on to distinguish in his final chapters between the myth that slavery in Britain was abolished in 1772 and the reality that slavery continued in one form or another in both Britain and the colonies right up to 1832. Supporting his thesis he surveys public opinion at the time, quoting extensively from racists like Samuel Estwick and Edward Long, the historian of Jamaica who believed that 'an orang-outang husband would not be any dishonour to a Hottentot female'. He documents meticulously many minor cases including that of Joseph Knight which established the Somerset principle in Scotland; the slave ship Zong case in which the commander, Luke Collingwood, attempted to collect the insurance on the 136 alive and as well as can be expected African slaves he threw overboard somewhere off the coast of Jamaica; and the Grace Jones case in 1822. All of them illustrated that slavery and attitudes towards it were far from changed after the Mansfield decision in 1772. All of them, with the exception of the Grace Jones case, also illustrated that Granville Sharp, and not William Wilberforce, who incidentally was a Johnny-come-late to the abolition movement, was the first true exponent of the 'cause and plight of African slaves'.

In a tradition which, perhaps, started with Dubois and is exemplified in the writings of Fanon, Garvey, Williams, and James, Shyllon too has started the long 'uphill work' of rewriting 'white' history as it pertains to black peoples. F.O. Shyllon's book, *Black Slaves in Britain*, is therefore not only one which should be read by academics; it is one which all of us interested in historical accuracy and the story behind the story of British slavery will find irresistibly stimulating and revolutionary.

Chris Mullard

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OCTOBER 1974 20p

Two Worlds In Conflict



LETTERS

Industrial Relations Act - Jamaica

Sir,

We are sure you know all about the Industrial Relations Act by means of which the late Conservative Government tried to hamstring the British Trade Unions. What you may not know is that in February of this year the government of Jamaica introduced a Bill, the Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Bill, closely modelled on the British Act. This Bill has been referred to a Select Committee of the House of Representatives, where consideration of it will probably be resumed in September.

The Bill provides a simple machinery by which the right to take industrial action in a number of 'essential services' can be made illegal. This will also apply to 'any industry or enterprise in which the Government feels that industrial action will cause an interruption in the supply of goods or in the provision of services of such a nature or on such a scale as to be likely to be gravely injurious to the national interest'.

The term 'industrial action' is defined in the Bill very widely so as to include not only strikes but a wide range of normal trade union activity. Anyone participating in an illegal industrial action can be ordered to pay a fine well beyond the means of the average employee and the Bill provides that anyone failing to pay his fine can be held in custody on a Writ of Attachment. (This is a roundabout way in which the legal draftsmen have got around the problem that the Prime Minister has promised the trade unions that the Bill would not provide for the imprisonment of workers taking part in an illegal strike!)

Another feature of the proposed legislation is that it contains the means whereby, when a poll is taken to decide which union shall represent the workers, the extent of the 'bargaining unit' can be fixed in such a way as to prevent recognition of the smaller unions. This is particularly important in view of the fact that in recent years, in a number of workplaces, the workers have opted for representation by unions other than the two major unions attached to the two major political parties. By fixing larger bargaining units the development of unions which the employees themselves control could be impeded.

There are other negative features of the Bill, but we feel sure we have said enough to enable you to appreciate how subversive of traditional democratic trade union rights this proposed legislation is.

There is no need for us to remind you that the present Jamaican Government is heavily dependent on working class votes at election time. It is therefore not surprising that an attempt has been made to represent the Bill as some kind of workers' charter. The Bill does contain

provision for compulsory recognition of trade unions by employers and for fines on employers guilty of certain offences. But these provisions are little more than sugar to coat an otherwise bitter pill. Significantly, the Jamaica Employers' Federation and the Farquarson Institute (formerly the Imperial Association!) are in favour of the proposed legislation!

There are many people who regard the present government of Jamaica as an improvement on the previous government and do not wish to think ill of its intentions. This is understandable, but people must realise that the government has the support of some of the biggest financial institutions as well as its popular support. A successful politician has been defined as one who takes money from the rich and votes from the poor, promising to protect each against the other. In this issue it is up to the poor (a term which includes the vast majority) to let the politicians in office know that their eyes are open. It is worth remembering that when a very similar type of government in Guyana proposed legislation a couple of years ago which would have replaced the right to strike with compulsory arbitration, it was forced by popular protest to withdraw the Bill. The same can be achieved in Jamaica. If the popular protests against the Jamaica Bill are strong enough, the Prime Minister can always withdraw it.

Living in this country we have seen the harm that this type of legislation can do and many of us have participated in some form of protest against the British Industrial Relations Act. Those who have had this experience, whether we are from Jamaica or from one of the other countries of the Caribbean area, or from this country, will readily realise the threat to the trade union movement which the Jamaica Bill represents. But the threat is not only to the Jamaican people. Legislation like this is contagious. In this age of the multinational corporation, if the employers can get such legislation onto the statute books of one country, they will be encouraged to try to get it introduced in another, then another and another. We therefore have no hesitation in asking all workers and progressive-minded persons to support our protest.

Jamaica Trade Union Solidarity Committee,
10 Leigh Road,
London N.5.

Police Brutality

Sir,

I have just received a copy of *Race Today* for June and I do feel I must comment upon the article headed, 'Move as a Community'. But I must ask to remain 'anonymous' if you should wish to publish any of this letter. I do not know the three lads involved, but I do feel very deeply for them indeed. I am not able to help them in any way and it is always

very hard when one is unable to do anything. I do a lot of work amongst Black people - African, West Indian - more lately Asian. We used to have a Community house in Cable Street, Stepney for West Indians and Africans in the 1950s and I served there for four years - and since then after a 'period abroad I have kept my contacts with the immigrant races.

Wherever I move about the country I do hear these kinds of protests against the police by all my black friends, that they are bothered by the police and often insulted; this goes for adult as well as for teenagers. I thought, myself, that this was only police behaviour to black people until I spoke to a full time youth leader who assured me that white youth, innocent of any offence, also came in for harsh treatment and that he had in his youth work had a lot of trouble with the police. At a meeting of youth leaders recently I asked the question, how best can we defend a teenager who is in trouble with the police, and whom do we know are the innocent? It was admitted that there was no real way of being able in a case like this of doing very much for the teenager. Nobody seems really powerful enough to bring a case against police - perhaps it is right that nobody should be more powerful than the law, but in that case, means will have to be found of teaching police the wrongness of prejudices.

It is an alarming that that one feels that protection of an innocent youth is so hard to obtain. There is also another danger which I saw only too clearly the last time I was in London - I had to get a late bus one evening and the bus was stopped from going by a group of young West Indians who were very menacing. The only answer was to get the police, but I did it reluctantly as one doesn't want to be responsible for getting anybody a beating up. It will be a bad business if we cannot feel able to call in the police for fear of their own action.

I do not want to finish on this note - for I feel in need of saying as well the wonderful work of the police in the face of very much provocation, and often their work is very helpful and deeply considerate of people's needs. Gangs of young people also are fairly alarming over the police. I am indeed sorry for these three lads and I think this letter is the only way I can express my feelings.

I do not as a rule see your magazine, for as a community which depends a great deal on support from other people, we have to be very restrictive in our magazines that we get, but I had a friend lend this copy to me.

Perhaps I can also say that we are still very much concerned with the immigrant population. We do need to learn so much to live together as brothers, of our rejection of each other in our rejecting of God, Our Father.

Name and address supplied

(Letters cont.
on p. 287.)

The Rise of Jack Jones

Jack Jones, leader of the Transport and General Workers' Union, has been elevated in the last week from the TUC platform to the dizzy heights of possible prime minister-ship. The *Evening Standard* (5.9.74) states: 'If a vacuum exists in British politics, people assume it has to be filled from the right by Mr. Enoch Powell or an Army general. It is just as possible that a new national leader could come from the left and in the person of the determined and powerful Mr. Jones.'

The vague reference 'to people' and the assumption that follows bear little relation to what the mass of workers are thinking. More to the point, it represents the only possible alternative open to the ruling class, who knows only too well the depth and breadth of the impending crisis. Either Jack Jones, if he can successfully mystify the workers to accept that the working class movement and the Labour Government are fundamentally one and the same thing, or, should he fail, Enoch Powell or an Army general with the iron fist of repression. Jones' credentials are rooted in his apparently successful efforts to mobilise the TUC Conference in favour of the social contract, the basis of which is a voluntary acceptance by workers of a wage restraint.

The fact is that today everybody knows that no single trade union leader, including Jones, has the credibility of the moral authority to persuade workers to join a partnership arrangement with State Power. However, the elevation of Jones by the national press (see *Sunday Times*, 31.8.74) is a recognition even in part of the strength and power, actual and potential of the British working class, or at least a section of it. For the sections to benefit most from trade unions are white men over the age of 35.

Nowhere is this as clearly illustrated as in the struggles of black workers and the way in which white workers have aligned themselves with the bureaucracy. The T&GWU has

occupied more pages in *Race Today* than any other single union, and on almost every occasion the union has presented itself as a co-partner with management in the maintenance of low wages and appalling working conditions for black workers. Perhaps it is for this single contribution that Jack Jones is being rewarded. However, it can be guaranteed that the one section which cannot be mystified into any partnership with State Power would be black workers, particularly those of us from the Caribbean, and for two reasons:

Firstly we, most of us, have been engaged in that partnership before emigrating to Britain. In the Caribbean, almost every single Prime Minister came to power as a leader of a working class organisation — union invariably preceded party. Independence movements were in essence social contracts between the working classes on the one hand and their educated sons and daughters on the other, who were educated to manage the colonial state. Progressive though these movements were, the presence of trade union leaders within the governmental apparatus demystified for all time any possibility of associating them with the total liberation of the workers.

And, secondly, the dead hand of trade union bureaucracy has been heaviest on the backs of black workers here in Britain. A combination of both historical experiences has pushed black workers further along the road to independent working class organisation. Both the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) and the Indian Workers Association represent one step along that road.

Today on the shop floor and in the community, there germinates now organisational possibilities which must stand head and shoulders over all that has gone before. When they emerge, as they must, they will give added strength and power to the forces ranged against Mr. Jones.

This issue was edited by Leila Hassan

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The period since the summer shutdown at Fords Dagenham has seen a lot of trouble. Various sections have been taking action to try to find some way of getting more money out of the company before another wage freeze comes along, probably before the end of the year. The crisis is making everyone take organisation much more seriously than before and, at Dagenham, foremen have been waging a highly political campaign.

The foremen at Fords have more pressure on them than anyone else and complain of nervous breakdowns and heart attacks. They're recruited from the working class and a lot of them are ex-stewards - Fords is always quick to offer positions as foremen to stewards. Whereas Ford carworkers are the worst paid in Britain - £18 below the top basic day rate in the industry at Chrysler, Coventry - Ford foremen are among the best paid in Europe. So the temptation is real enough.

But money isn't everything and the first week after the shutdown, on Wednesday, 14 August, the foremen went on strike. The background is reported in the July 1974 *Race Today*. In the summer there was a particular incident of a black brother supposedly having a fight with a foreman. On this occasion the brother got a two day suspension, but the foremen wanted him sacked. Fords refused, saying there was no proof that he hit the foreman.

The basic position on this is as follows: there is fighting in Fords everyday of the week, sometimes between two blokes, often between a worker and a foreman. Fords sacks automatically anyone 'guilty' of starting the fight. So even in a fight between two men there will be some informal trial and whoever started the trouble will be sacked. The union agrees with this policy and participates in it. On this occasion the issue at question was, on the surface, whether there was 'proof' that the guy hit the foreman. Fords said there was no proof, and the union agreed, but the foremen, who are in ASTMS, insisted that their word should be proof. If they won this the foremen would, in effect, have powers of instant dismissal.

Fords, naturally, is not against this in principle but they have to deal with the fact that they know the vast majority of men at Dagenham support anyone who hits a foreman. Should they give in to the foremen over this, there is a likelihood of riots if a foreman were to try it on again.

'Workers' Control' at Fords?

So this was a highly political strike and it brought about a confusing situation on the shop-floor, when the company and the union decided to have a try-out at a little 'workers' control'. In the three main plants, Engine, Body and PTA, most stewards and convenors were saying that

the best way to oppose the foremen was to supposedly 'scab' on them by working without foremen, and by doing this they'd show that the workers could run the lines.

The attempts to do this were half successful with 'good' work-

ers being selected from each section to take charge over their fellow workers, all arranged through the unions - the possible shape of things to come.

In some places it was resisted and effectively rejected. This was most true on the 'B' shift, PTA



Roy Cornwall

FORDS Foremen Strike Against Workers

(Assembly Plant) where the workers were able to create a chaotic situation and get paid. Ford replied to this by laying the shift off in the middle of the following night, so that many blokes couldn't get home. For several days this situation continued with Fords getting very little production and action being taken to win lay-off pay for the shifts that were laid off.

The outcome of this particular struggle seems clear. The brother the foremen were trying to get rid of has not been sacked. And on Wednesday, 21 August, after the strike had finished, a guy on the PTA 'B' shift threw a box of bolts at a foreman and they just tried to have him suspended - there was no talk of sacking him. Most of the demands for lay-off pay were won and Fords again seems scared to lay people off in case they riot.

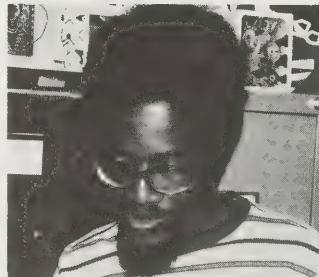
The foremen's strike was started out of their everyday fears of being physically attacked. This applies mostly to the Caribbean and African workers, most of whom have had fights with foremen at some stage of their working lives. But the foremen's strike at Fords wasn't prompted by racism but was a political attack on a political power, that power being the formidable organisation of workers in the plant. This was generally recognised and the big majority of workers, both white and Asian as well as Caribbean and African, were against the foremen. There are also growing signs in the various actions that have taken place recently that the racism and racial divisions that exist in Fords are being broken down, through the unity that is forged in action.

Ford workers

Reinstate Rodney Now

Almost one year ago, British television viewers were given an insight into the exercise of governmental power in the Caribbean country, Guyana. The *World in Action* team revealed in a documentary on the last election how the ruling party, the PNC, resurrected the dead who in turn registered their votes, how a five-year-old voted the Prime Minister Burnham into power. We were shown an address on the voters' list which did not exist and a Jamaican woman admitted that she cast her vote for the Guyanese PNC.

That is, how the Government came to power and it exercises that power by equally bizarre methods. On 10 July, 1974, Walter Rodney, writer and lecturer, was selected for the post of Head of the History Department at the University of Guyana. Author of *Groundings with my Brothers*, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* and *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast 1545-1800*, Rodney has contributed more than any single individual in our



time to the popular consciousness in the New World of the lives and struggles of African peoples (see *Race Today*, April 1974). In 1968 he was refused re-entry into Jamaica where he was a lecturer for this contribution. Jamaicans rioted as a consequence, burning buses and buildings in the heart of the capital, Kingston. As an associate professor at the University College, Tanzania, he has made a like contribution to the consciousness of Africans on the Caribbean question. Academically his work on Africa is essential to any study on the social and political antecedents of modern Africa.

The appointments committee verified this by the selection of Rodney over other applicants. The committee was subsequently approached by 'unspecified authorities' to reconsider their decision. This they did and by a majority vote reaffirmed the decision to appoint Rodney. However, there was more to come. The Board of Governors at the University (a government appointed body) suddenly revoked the appointment without rhyme or reason. Students at the University have responded with a massive protest demanding the reinstatement of Rodney. At a public meeting in the capital Georgetown hundreds of workers and unemployed youths gathered to register their protest. On every university campus throughout the Caribbean, and many in North America, students are demanding that Rodney be given the opportunity to make a much needed contribution to the intellectual development of Caribbean people.

Amidst these protests, facts revealing the savagery of the re-

NF Teacher Out!

The National Front puts a great deal of emphasis on the education of British children, seeing this as one of the main arenas for the ideological struggle for the future. In the past, they have campaigned vigorously against left-wing teachers and their influence in the staff room and have constantly raised the bogey of the multi-racial school as somehow detracting from the education of white children. This sometimes has its lighter moments, as the spelling syntax and punctuation of one of last year's NF leaflets in Leicester made clear: 'The National Front campaigns for an end to the dreadful state of affairs in local schools which hinder our children's education.'

But the education of their pamphleteers notwithstanding they are deadly serious in their intentions. Now, the candidature of Richard Edmonds in the coming elections as NF candidate for Deptford in South East London has brought into the open the contradiction between their self-righteous indignation and the reality of their practice. For Edmonds is the new maths teacher at Tulse Hill School, the comprehensive which serves the Brixton area of London and which last term was the scene of intense political activity, including a one-day strike, around the case of the Brockwell Part Three.

Edmonds joined the staff last term as a new teacher after previously working in industry and then qualifying as a mature student. He didn't tell headmaster Evans of his political affiliations until after he had started the job and his politics would have seeped

quietly into his lessons unobserved if he hadn't been photographed holding the banner at a NF rally. As it is, the photograph, taken by a left-wing teacher attending a counter-demonstration, was passed onto Paul Stephenson, a black school governor, and given wide-spread publicity at the beginning of the new term.

The teachers at the school have mobilised rapidly around the issue. A meeting of the common room society passed overwhelmingly a motion affirming their belief in the multi-racial society at the beginning of the term at which only a handful of teachers abstained. Edmonds read in a most unconvincing and embarrassing fashion a previously prepared statement saying that some people were optimists and some were realists, and, fearing future racial bloodshed, he set himself alongside the realists. Hence his NF candidature. His realism does not help him much at the school: he has been ostracised by 90% of the staff, most of the maths department refuse to talk to him, and Stephenson has called for a meeting of the board of governors to discuss the matter further and ascertain whether they accept a candidate of an avowedly racist party as a teacher in a multi-racial school.

The students have meanwhile been uncharacteristically quiet. It may be that they don't accept the need for such a fuss when a handful of racist teachers have been practicing their nonsense at the school for years. For while the mobilisation of the teachers is a key point and the consternation of the governors may hold some significance, the real power lies in the hands of the students. Whether they make Edmonds' life

intolerable in the school, or use their numbers to exert political pressure on the local authority, it is them who must take up and continue the moves made by the teachers.

Lambeth Squatters

Just off the Brixton Road is a quiet side street called Evandale Road. Outside a large board proclaims that Lambeth Council is refurbishing these premises: at the other end, we see the results of their work. The houses are beautifully done up inside and out.

But they are in unfashionable Brixton, and here, the Council have taken them over and given them a thorough clean and paint and overhaul as a welcome relief from the normal local authority tower block and concrete pattern. Number eleven and number seven already have what you might call 'legitimate' tenants in them. Families, one black, one white, who have managed to gain themselves enough points and enough seniority in the enormous housing list to at last have a secure and welcome roof over their heads.

Numbers nine, thirteen, and fifteen have also been inhabited by families, all of them black and none of them 'legitimate'. They have in fact broken the golden rule of the apparently permissive local authority and squatted, not in short-term housing where the roof leaks, the toilet overflows and rats run over the beds at night.

Lambeth local authority now finds itself in a desperate situation. Faced with one of the worst

housing crises in history, competing with private enterprise for land and property to house the thousands of workers needed to run the city's services on behalf of capital, over the past three years they have been forced to take a benevolent attitude towards squatters in short-life property taken over by the Council who have in fact removed from the local authority the obligation to house them. But a firm line has been drawn at the take-over by squatters of newly prepared accommodation. The line is that this is reserved to those who have been on the waiting list in the normal fashion. If the council start to give way on the case of the Evandale Road squatters — who have offered to pay rent and rates — they feel that their new premises will be squatted by people jumping the queue.

Lambeth's housing officer, Mr. Nicholson, has visited the squatters and told them that if they get out, the families can visit the Homeless Families Unit, which would probably try and fix bed and breakfast accommodation. He knows for sure that the Council will get an eviction order and get those people out of there by hook or by crook. Because if he doesn't, it's the thin end of the wedge, a wedge that even Lambeth will not allow.

So the battle lines are drawn up. On the one side, those who have been through the full horrors of homelessness in London. On the other side, a council determined not to allow its system of housing priorities to be undercut by peoples' own self-activity, assisted by bailiffs, courts, police and a press who can write vast acreages without interviewing the actual squatters themselves.

gime have come to light: that another lecturer Joshua Ramsamy was shot and left for dead. The car used in this attempted assassination was traced to the Guyanese Ministry of Works & Hydraulics — no charges were laid. Ramsamy was known to oppose the policies of the Cooperative Republic: another lecturer Clive Thomas, was kidnapped by policemen and beaten. He subsequently identified his kidnappers — no charges were laid; contracts of other lecturers were not reviewed because they dared to hold independent points of view.

The persecution of leading numbers of ASCRIA (African Society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa), the recent framing on a gun charge of PPP leader Cheddi Jagan, the use of armed force against the just protests of workers, peasants and unemployed sum up a reign of terror by a regime surrounded on all sides by the mass of disaffected Guyanese.

Here in London the Committee of Concerned West Indians are calling a public meeting at Conway Hall on 13 September 1974 to demand the reinstatement of Rodney, to be followed by a mass picket at the Guyanese High Com-

mission.

For further details of on-going protest activities, the Committee of Concerned West Indians can be contacted at 141 Coldershaw Rd, W.13. Tel: 01-579 4920.



Dominicans in Support of Progress demonstrate outside the Eastern Caribbean High Commission against trumped up charges of murder on two political activists in Dominica, Desmond Trotter and Roy Mason. For further details of support activities, contact DSP, 37 Tollington Park, London N.4. Tel. 01-272 0594 and 01 739 4996.

Carnival in a Strange Land

100,000 people, overwhelmingly black and West Indian, claimed the streets of Notting Hill as their own on Bank Holiday weekend. The occasion — the annual Carnival Festival.

The Carnival Festival is peculiarly Trinidadian, held annually on the Monday and Tuesday immediately preceeding the Lenten-season, it has been historically a working-class festival staged by the African section of the class. Denied all outward expression of the African experience, the slave community, socialised in the thousands on the sugar plantations, appropriated the French colonial form and infused it with a West Indian content. Consequently on the two days, small groups and individuals would disguise themselves and parade through the streets, originally mimicking their masters. As the working class grew in strength and confidence, new creative forces were unleashed. The groups grew in numbers and the costumes became more elaborate and daring.

With the end of slavery, the post-colonial economy fostered permanent unemployment. From within this section of the working class, the steel band as a musical art form emerged to give new creative depth to the Carnival Festival. Nor did the Colonial authorities allow the festival to develop unchecked. Always in fear of large gatherings of the working class, for whatever purpose, slave laws banning gatherings and processions were evoked to destroy Carnival. Riots ensued as the working class defied the ban, subsequently forcing the authorities to concede.

The sheer dynamism of Carnival produced the calypsonian, the poet of the working class who in verse and song recorded the concrete experiences, the fantasies, the hopes and aspirations (poli-

tical and social) of a people making their way in the brutal conditions of the new world. Calypso and steel band go hand in hand, the former providing the largest slice of the songs played by the latter. This twin relationship survives until today; stylistic changes in one area, informing the development of the other.

Post Second World War Trinidad, like every other Caribbean society, was decimated by mass unemployment and underemployment. Low wages strangled the few who could get work. Thousands of workers emigrated to North America, and Britain as a consequence. To these territories we brought little material possessions; what we did bring was ourselves in which resided the whole history of Caribbean society — steel band, calypso, Carnival and all. Surrounded on all sides by a cultural climate which, however unwittingly, demanded an elimination of our former selves, we rechristened Britain — Babylon. In overcrowded rooms, basement shebeens, we sought to recreate in a strange land the spirit which informed Carnival. Every Trinidadian carried a long face on the day Carnival was celebrated back home.

From within the cultural struggles of diverse individual selves a social self was born. The Colherne Pub in Earls Court represented the first social institution to reflect the search of the Trinidadian personality for a distinct cultural expression here in Babylon. There Russell Henderson, Sterling Betancourt and Vernon Fellows, former steelbandmen and Carnival bandleaders in the home town, entertained West Indians with calypso and jazz. It became known as the Sunday school, a welcome break from the cultural aggression that we faced in the factories, the universities and the mass media.

The demanding audience at the Colherne forced the organisers to break new barriers, and in 1965 the idea of Carnival in London was born. Notting Hill was chosen as the venue. It was the closest to being liberated territory. The West Indian community had fought off the racists in the famous Notting Hill Riots of 1958, the community had put up a major resistance to police brutality, and in so doing established itself as a major bridgehead in the struggle of Black people in Britain. Where the social organisation at the Sunday school produced the idea, the community organisation in Notting Hill would give it roots.

The first ever Carnival in London was held on August Bank Holiday, 1965. One steel band and 500 revellers represented little more than a makeshift operation. It appeared then that the community still lacked the confidence to parade openly its experiences, hopes and aspirations. That was still to come. After eight years of teasing, the Carnival took on a mass creative form in 1973. More steel bands surfaced, supplemented by reggae music. Costumes appeared for the first time, though largely borrowed from participants in Trinidad.

And now 1974. 100,000 people and a dozen bands with costumes prepared here in Britain. The band 'Rebels on Remand', portrayed by the youths of Notting Hill, was the first concrete experience to be projected. Wearing prison outfits, they displayed the lot of Black youths in the urban situation. Other bands appropriated fantasies and gave them concrete art form. It is the first Carnival Festival to approach the mass creativity of its counterpart in Trinidad.

Over and above all, the strengths and weaknesses of a Carnival Festival is the measure of the stage of development of the West Indian community in Britain.



Ron McCormick



Strikes in Leicester

Delta Mouldings

A swift two day strike successfully settled a host of outstanding grievances at the three shops of Delta Mouldings, a plastics factory where heels and soles are manufactured for the shoe trade.

A small factory, it employs a work force of 112 workers, 20 white workers (foremen and maintenance men); the remainder are Asian machine operators.

In 1969 the workers were paid a miserable wage of £16 for forty hours, supplemented by bonus payments. Workers favoured by the foremen were paid more in bonuses than others, a system that effectively set one worker against another and prolonged a chaotic situation on the shop floor well into 1971.

By 1972 this was overcome, and an organisation of workers on the floor led to unionisation with an effective shop steward leadership. Pay negotiations resulted in three eight-hour shifts instead of the two twelve-hour shifts worked previously, a £4 increase in the basic rate, shift allowances and regularised bonus payments.

Management constantly sought to undermine this agreement by bonus cheating which led weekly to a shortage of money in the pay packets. Constant complaints produced numerous promises to rectify matters.

Three weeks ago again the pay packets arrived and the wages were short. At 10 pm. the workers stopped the machines and approached the foreman. Again promises that the wages would be rectified. A two-hour meeting with management bore no fruit and at 12.45 am. the workers walked out.

The following day the local T&GWU official called in the Department of Employment, and together with himself and management, decided to negotiate a deal. The workers refused and won the demand that the shop stewards committee only be empowered to negotiate with management.

At this point several grievances were brought forward:

The basic grievance of short-

tages in the wage packet.

2. The abusive and racist attitudes of management and foremen.

3. That the workers be paid waiting time on the average bonus rate as opposed to the flat rate whenever machines broke down.

4. That workers be paid the same bonus rate when transferred to a new machine.

5. No favouritism in handing out overtime, that it be done on a rota basis.

6. Equal rises for all and at the same time, since it was customary for management to give individual rises to favoured workers.

7. Shop stewards must be paid while on union business.

8. No random transfer of workers from machine to machine.

9. That all workers be paid the same wage since some were paid £21 for 40 hours while others were paid £25.

10. That foremen tell workers immediately what materials are immediately what materials are pro-classified as scrap so that the process can be righted immediately. Continued production in bad processing led to a serious fall in earnings.

RECOMMENDATION

'The workers are represented by Mr. George Bromley who is a tough but most capable negotiator well able to look after their interests.' - Michael Stamper, Director of the East Midlands Engineering Employers Association.

Within hours management conceded every single one of the points with pickets from Imperial Typewriters, Barrington Products, Kenilworth Components and Walker Crisps breathing down their necks.

Barrington Products

124 Asian machine operators at Barrington Products in Leicester have been locked out by management. There they manufacture plastic components for British Radio Corporation. Plessey and GEC, among others. Working in

A growing confidence among Asian workers in Leicester is fast developing on the heels of the Imperial Typewriter strike. The strike committee's premises in Garfield Street had become a point of reference for the discussion of grievances and methods of struggle among this work force. Strikers from Barrington Products, Delta Mouldings and Kenilworth Components are constantly drawing on the immense power and experience forged by the Imperial workers, a testimony to the credibility of the Imperial Strike Committee. On the other hand a discredited trade union establishment drawing on a disparate group of would be Asian bureaucrats, launch their counter attack, peppered with cheap pamphleteering and violence with the aid of the local radio, *The Leicester Mercury* and the East Midlands Engineering Association.

Side by side with this, left organisations poach for new members, offering a host of sub-committees in a desperate attempt to get in on the act. All this has served to strengthen the resolve of the Asian work force and brings closer the emergence of a genuine working class organisation of black workers in that embattled city.

Below we report the details of strikes at Barrington Products, Delta Mouldings and Kenilworth Components.

Kenilworth Components

Asian workers at Kenilworth Components are out on strike again. Under their first three-day strike in July (*September Race Today*) the Union negotiated an agreement with management which included a no-redundancies clause. The women went back to work for a month and then seven women were sacked. The response was immediate - all the women walked out stating that they would not return to work until the women had been re-instated. They stayed outside the factory picketing; with them were workers from Barrington Plastics. As they waited for the day shift to end the police arrived. They asked why so many workers were outside, and explained the laws relating to picketing. A Superintendent told the workers: 'If you only want to persuade them to come out - which is all you are entitled to do under the law - then it doesn't take 150 of you, it could be considered as intimidation.' But the workers insisted that they had a right to be there, after all they wanted to do was talk to the men as they came out of the factory. The workers came out; they were met by the pickets, the police stood by as the discussions took place in Gujarati - a cheer came from the crowd as the workers agreed to strike. Everyone went home to return at nine o'clock to talk to the night shift workers (who also agreed to strike). The few white workers still remain in the factory.

The strike has been made official by the T&GWU - but management refuses to talk either to them or the DEP, and is still producing soles and packaging in its Manchester factory - where the Union has been slow to bring the workers out. Meanwhile the major source of support for the 33 women and 20 men comes from other workers from Walkers Crisps, Barrington Products, Delta Mouldings and Imperial Typewriters who assist not only by picketing the factory; they have set up a fund from which strikers can get assistance, if necessary.

two twelve-hour shifts, the men are paid £22.35p for 40 hours and earn £43 for 65 hours gross. During the two week holiday period, management surreptitiously employed workers to keep the works moving. At the end of the holidays the workers demanded that those who worked during the holidays who worked during the holidays be sent home for two weeks. Management was forced to concede and in turn took the opportunity to exploit outstanding pay grievances, ultimately leading to a lock out.

Following a meeting with the workers on 15 March, on the question of increase in pay, management replied: 'We regret to advise you that after discussions with the East Midlands Employers Association, we are unable to make any increase until 25 August.' Using the minor confrontation on holiday working, management pre-empted the 25 August negotiating date by suggesting that the workers go on a three-day working week. The workers agreed, with one stipulation - that the three days should be Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Time and a half on Saturday meant that no one would suffer any serious loss of earnings. Management refused.

Following this deadlock, another meeting was arranged. Management suggested a three shift system - eight hours per shift - to replace the two shift system (twelve hours per shift). The men agreed but their general meeting mandated the negotiators to demand £39.15p for the day shift and £42.15p for the night shift, as opposed to management's time for £33.45p day shift and £36.12p for the night shift.

With the power of the East Midlands Employers Association behind them, the management at Barringtons locked the workers out, claiming that they had very few orders and consequently no work. Subsequent negotiations have produced a deadlock. Under The Conciliation and Arbitration Act, Ken Hampstead of the T&GWU, called in the Department of Employment and Productivity to arbitrate.

TWO WORLDS IN CONFLICT

The following interviews graphically reflect one of the major social conflicts of our time — between, on the one hand the trade union bureaucracy and on the other the rank and file black workers. George Bromley, district official of the Leicester T&G, speaks to the Leicester RADIO concealing neither his racism, sexism nor his pro-management position.

In opposition to Bromley, the workers of Imperial Typewriters (fresh from a thirteen week strike), recall the scenes of the first union meeting since their return to work.

Last week we saw the shop steward talking to some white men and women. So we asked one of the white women to whom he spoke what it was all about. She said, 'Well, there is a union branch meeting on Monday and we are all informed about it'. I just kept quiet and said, let's see what is going on. After a day or so, the shop steward came to me. I think somebody must have told her to inform everybody and then she told us Asian workers that there is a branch meeting and everybody is allowed in, so if we want to attend it, we could. Still there was nothing on the notice board.

We attended a Union meeting before but not this kind. It used to be the other way around - only 20 or 50 black workers and 250 to 300 white workers. But today it was tremendous, it was quite the opposite: 300 black workers and about 75 white workers.

Reg Weaver stood up and explained the new threshold agreement: £2.25 under Phase 3, and £1.20 backdated to July 29th.

It took him quite a long time to explain it. He explained it in great detail which he had never done before. He looked a changed man, much better than before. And in between, wherever our people didn't agree, they just shouted and it was really difficult to control everybody. While Weaver was addressing the people, everybody was shouting. Weaver said, 'I would request the Strike Committee to control their people and let the meeting carry on'. They were shouting when he talked about the two-year ruling for shop stewards - the fact that one cannot become a shop steward before serving for two years in the union. One of us shouted 'bullshit!' People started saying that shop stewards were not elected democratically but selected by Weaver. And Weaver then pointed towards the strike committee and said, 'could you please ask your strike members to behave themselves?' Bali stood up and all the black workers kept quiet, they respect the strike committee. Bali told Weaver off. He said he shouldn't talk like this when he is on the stage: 'You are a con-

venor, you should know what you are speaking about. You shouldn't address anybody as a striker or strike committee as we are all workers; you should consider us as workers, not as strikers. We are in a union meeting, not a strike meeting.' Weaver never mentioned the strikers again.

Weaver continued talking about the two year ruling and he said it could not be changed. Then we presented a resolution to the meeting to abolish this two-year ruling. The resolution was as follows:

'Proposed resolution for Branch Meeting 5222 of the T&GWU to be held Monday, 19 August, 1974. This meeting 5221 of the T&GWU agrees that the two-year ruling of the standing orders requiring one to be able to stand as nominee for the post of shop steward be done away with from the date of this meeting. Instead it be replaced by the democratic decision of the workers on the shop floor to decide who becomes the shop steward.'

It was signed by 300 workers — some who had struck and some who hadn't. It was collected in a matter of 2½ hours. We presented this resolution and they said that this rule can only be changed at the Rules Conference. We had heard from Ken Grant, a T&GWU steward, in Birmingham on Saturday that this rule can be changed at a Branch Meeting. We said that this is not a national rule but a standing order and according to the law, a standing order can be abolished or changed by a simple majority at a Branch Meeting but they wouldn't agree.

It was Bali who argued with Weaver about this two-year ruling. Bali said, 'there is no such rule laid down by the Rules Committee. It's only a standing order, it can be abolished by the members in a Branch Meeting.'

Bromley then got up and our people started shouting and from that Bromley was looking like a wild cat. He didn't like it. He pulled the mike from Weaver as he stood up and all the black workers especially the strikers, booed at him and shouted and screamed. He said, 'Have you finished children?', and all the youngsters started to shout again and Bromley hit the table and said, 'The meeting is finished'.

I remember George Bromley's words on TV: 'It's a language problem, they can't understand very well or express themselves very well.' I think today it was the opposite. Our people were shouting and the whites were quiet. They didn't know what to say, they had a language problem today. A white worker asked if we were all members of the Union, later he left and quite a few other whites left with him. West Indians came to the meeting. One of them had a grievance.

When the meeting finally ended the shop stewards' attitude had completely changed. The majority are white shop stewards. Two Asians and one West Indian. And even they admitted that they were badly let down by Bromley over Imperial in the past. A lot of other things were brought up during this meeting. Weaver said that in the past he had approached many Asians to become shop stewards and practically all of them had refused to become shop stewards. He gave the example of N.C. Patel. When he had finally said everything, N.C. Patel got up and took the mike in his hand and said, 'Whatever Weaver has said is totally wrong and lies'. Then he explained that Weaver had offered him that if he became a shop steward, he could get 6½ per cent commission from the collection. It was a bribe. And Weaver shook his head. Everyone was amazed and N.C. Patel really spoke. Weaver then spoke and said half of this story is true and half the story is made up and he said N.C. Patel wanted to become a section leader. N.C. Patel replied that a supervisor had already offered him that post and told him that he had a habit of talking too much and that if he talks a little he can always have that job. There was no question of N.C. Patel asking Weaver for a favour to become a section leader. When the whites and shop stewards who had stayed behind heard this they were really shocked. After the meeting the young workers surrounded Bromley. They said 'Come on Dad. give me a lollipop, give me some money. I want to buy a lollipop'. That was because he called them children. Bromley felt so small he was hiding from them.

TWO WORLDS IN CONFLICT

Interview with George Bromley, 30 years a Transport and General Workers' union negotiator, JP and stalwart of the Leicester Labour Party.

On The Imperial Typewriters Strike

The Imperial Management, they are not American style Management at all. I've no brief for management and by and large I don't find many managements very efficient, but I'll say this, the Imperial Typewriter Management are soft and if we have got a case we have no difficulty in winning it, no difficulty.

I didn't hear about the strike when it first happened. I was in Babbacombe enjoying myself and I came back home and Reg Weaver (the works' convenor) rang me late on a Saturday night and started to tell me about this very small dispute that had occurred at Imperial. I was a bit annoyed, I don't like being rung on a Saturday night when I am technically on holiday, I was a bit short with him, and then I realised that he wasn't ringing me to tell me about a very small dispute. There was obviously already something seriously wrong — that was why he was ringing. I waited until Monday and I went to the office. I did the usual thing we always do — check the facts, get the information and the information seemed very simple — a rates dispute, one that looked like being easily settled.

As a matter of fact it was settled. The 24 people, their demands were met, in fact the stewards went one stage further, got them a little more than they were asking for, if we are talking about a rates dispute.

The first week it was a rates demand and the most wild allegations were being made then in the most violent language, too. That men were being literally swindled by the Industrial Relations Department, or that men were being deliberately told lies by foremen. As fast as these demands were being put we investigated and everytime we could find nothing in it.

Any good shop steward can settle most complaints very quickly if it is justified. You see when this dispute first started it was about rates, then it moved to race, then it moved from race to the discrimination against females, and then it moved back to race and then back to

rates. Let us take these complaints forms. In that particular factory at Copdale Road we sent in a deputy convenor last year and his job was virtually to look after the problems of this rapid expansion of Asian labour, new to the factory, new to the country. We actually couldn't get enough shop stewards so we sent in a deputy convenor. He couldn't handle complaints forms, they were coming to him by the hundreds everyday. But they weren't complaints, not in the sense as we would know it. An ordinary worker wouldn't have even made such a complaint, he would have known, and in the end this deputy convenor, he gave the job up after being a shop steward for over 30 years.

I don't talk to represent myself. I have to talk to represent the opinion of my organisation. Now the conciliation committee of the Race Relations Board, or its officers, have never talked to the union or its stewards. We have talked to no one about the Imperial Typewriters, so how do they know what goes off in the Union. Secondly, as I have said we are a working class organisation set up by workers run by workers. We don't profess to be the most efficient organisation in the world. All our work is done voluntarily. In the main people do it for nothing because they want to help other people. We resent outside people telling us what to do.

I am not responsible for the T&GWU report on the strike. I asked for the report — actually, I asked for it because of the most vicious and lying propaganda that was being issued against Reg Weaver, against me, and by implication the whole of the T&GWU.

I wasn't angry [when the strikers turned up en masse at my office in Eldon Street, hurling abuse]. I was sad that people should shout abuse when they knew very little of what was going on. They had no reason to abuse me. My job for thirty years has been to represent all people in this city. I haven't suited everybody, no one can do that, but in the main, officers and stewards have always tried to represent the working people's point of view.

You are bound to get emotionally involved. I'm still emotionally involved in the sense I feel so sad that about thirty years' work in race and community relations in this city has gone hopelessly wrong by the action of such a few people I've been engaged in industrial disputes

of every kind, but I do know this, that a chanting, howling mob yelling insults at their own people is not going to solve any of their problems or anyone else's for that matter. That is why I feel sad they have gone the wrong way, even if they have got any grievances, they can't settle it this way.

On Asian Women

Let us take this question of the ladies' toilets which you asked me about. Now this is a reputable firm, there are plenty of Factory Acts. No company stops people going to the toilet. This is so ludicrous, it's laughable in modern times. What happens here is that if a white lady wants to go to the toilet and she is working on a line, she doesn't ask anyone's permission, she just gets up — out she goes, powders her nose, has a cigarette, whatever they do — then comes back. Nobody bothers. Back on to the line she goes and work continues. Now some of these Asian ladies, I feel sorry for them, they are strangers, they don't know much about industrial life, they have led a very sheltered life, you know, and when they go to the toilet they go together. If there are 38 of them on the line, 38 go together for ten minutes and then, of course, the line stops. That's when the foreman begins to go in to hook them out. It's not that he wants to stop them from going to the toilet, we have got to persuade these people to do it on a stagger basis.

Look, we have just had another dispute, haven't we? A little company, this time Asian ladies, not in the union, go out on strike; they don't know what to do, they can't even talk English. What do they do? Now they have walked out but what do they do then. They don't know what to do. One of my Branch Secretaries, an Asian by the way, sees them, he brings them to the office — now they join the Union. Now we normally wouldn't accept white people and look after their interests this way, you know, they have got to serve their time in the Union before we look after them. We did

this for two reasons: because of the racial tension in this city and because these were such nice ladies — about twenty of them and grossly exploited. My Union took them in immediately and went to town on their behalf. That is how it should be done. We don't want the outsiders latching on. Any grievance and disputes can be settled this way if there is a genuine desire to do it.

On Race

Look at my branches. I've got branches, they are virtually all coloured, the Branch secretaries, the senior shop stewards, the Branch committee, the chairmen, they are all Asians and some are Jamaicans. They work quite well, there is no problem.

My district committee represents all the branches in this district and I believe I am speaking with their voice. They are very concerned with what has gone off at Imperial with the actions of a few. You see, the bulk of the Asian population didn't act this way and neither did the Polish Resettlement Corps or the European Volunteer Workers or the Jamaicans from the West Indies; this is just a few people from the sub-continent of Africa. Hard as it is, and I don't want to be racist, I can feel sorry for people that are dumped into a civilisation such as ours and they are taking the sticky end of the stick in these low-rated factories. Because they are semi-skilled, they are low-rated but they have got to learn to fit in with our ways, you know. We haven't got to learn to fit in with theirs. And the way they have been acting that means they will close factories and people won't employ them, that's all.

It's not because of colour prejudice or Asian prejudice. A union is run by working class people to look after the interests of working class people. They don't get paid for this you know, they do it voluntarily. But when they begin to talk to these few Asians who come along and won't listen, they easily lose patience I would accept that it's nothing to do with race, it's nothing to do with colour. They just say, 'Well, if you are not prepared to listen, you go about it your sweet way'. I'll go a little stage further. It has created some dissension within the shop stewards' committees. For example, they now begin to say, 'Well, if this is the way they want to run their business as far as we are concerned, we don't want them in the union'.

It may well be true that a white worker would have a slightly better chance of having his case heard than an Asian worker. There is a lot of resentment against the Asians in this city and people don't do a service by trying to hide it. I remember 20 years ago people would never talk about cancer, it was hidden in the hope that it would go away. Racism or racist talk is in the same position

today, and it's bad luck for these Asians because the bulk of Asians who have come to this city have fitted in very well and they are very good and hard workers. They are very nice people, they are gentle people. But the quite remarkable activities of these few at Dunlop Palmer, too, and a few at Walkers Crisps, not many, they are carefully planted in all the factories. This most extraordinary behaviour will make matters worse, creating racial tension.

The race relations enquiry I welcomed immediately, I used to sit on the conciliation committee, so I know all about the way they operate. I wanted this because it's time people said loud and clear there is no racial prejudice in that factory. The RRB has said there is no racial prejudice in one sense. Look in every factory — there is prejudice. The working people of this country have had prejudice flung at them ever since the industrial revolution and there will always be prejudice in every factory; it's nothing to do with colour necessarily.

On Trade Unionism At Imperial

We, the T&GWU, didn't represent them [the Asians], they didn't want us to represent them. You see, to represent people we have got to listen to them first, and then when we have listened and investigated we can do one of two things only. We can say, 'Yes, we believe you're right, you have got a case and we can process it for you'. Or we can say, 'Sorry brother, you have no case at all. There is nothing we can do, this is the agreement, this is the customary practice'. Now we were not communicating because they wouldn't listen. They don't listen if we say they haven't got a case or if we say management is right.

There was no official backing because there were only a fraction on strike. There was 1,200 at work who didn't want to come out, who didn't believe in these people's case. If we had had a Branch meeting, a lot of people inside the Union would not have turned up. We know that they would have been told not to turn up. Those that turned up might have taken a vote to come out officially. That means 400 were going to instruct or make quite sure that 1,200 had got to come out whether they wanted to or not — an impossible situation for the Union that would be. A strike can only be made official when the agreed disputes procedure has been exhausted and when the Executive Council is prepared to say yes, this is a case worth fighting for with a chance of winning. All strikes are not inevitably made official. There's many a time when our members have come out

and we have had to say we are very sorry, but the only thing we can advise is that you go back. And that is what I did to these people of course. From the very word go when they came to see me I said at the moment I have investigated what grievances I had heard and I had found no substance in them. But I am always prepared to admit that there must be grievances because you can always find grievances in a factory, and my advice was to go back and attempt to resolve these grievances in the proper way. There is a method for resolving these grievances.

On Conspiracy

The Imperial Typewriters dispute is the tip of the iceberg. This dispute could have been settled quite easily. But you see, it's not an industrial dispute and it's going to blow again. Make no mistake about this. There are certain people who don't want a settlement, their tactics are to cause disruption. They fasten on what could be, on the surface, legitimate grievances, and then they refuse to let us handle them in the proper way.

I have never, in thirty years, seen such a sustained campaign as in this strike, using typical methods to discredit an organisation. This is nothing to do with the Asians, of course, you realise — they are just tools that are being used. And this was far worse than normal. Leicester has its share of industrial problems, same as in Coventry, Birmingham, London, Manchester or Liverpool. It doesn't matter, we are the same here as anywhere, but we have learnt a more civilised method of resolving our industrial differences.

At Imperial we are going to see Reg Weaver, the convenor, retiring soon, and we have got plenty of trained people down there competent to do it. But I don't think it will work because I should say about the end of August they will be out on strike again. The real answer to this, of course, is that there are unscrupulous people who don't want industrial peace. Imperial Typewriters now is a hot bed of discontent and can be exploited by extremists of all kinds. There will be more problems a lot more. I'm not going to say this on the radio, but we know where the problems will occur; we know which factories it will occur in. We know who is going to lead it and we even know what propaganda is going to be put out. I've got very good Asian shop stewards and senior convenors working behind the scenes for us on this. This means that they are prepared to have a go at any management, the proper way, through the legitimate procedure with a good case. But they are not going to lend themselves to violence and revolutionary tactics merely to disrupt and bring industry to a standstill.

CH The Wor Road to



As the counter-revolution in Chile becomes an established fact, more urgent is the task of reporting in an unmythified way the great working class struggles that took place in Chile during the Allende regime. Most of the writing on the subject both before and after the coup of 11 September, 1973 has either ignored or has misinterpreted these struggles. A strange mixture of socialist ideologies and social democratic melodrama that ultimately serves only to confuse the movement has taken the place of a positive history of the working class. The original source of confusion is the false assumption that the Allende government, the political parties that formed the Unidad Popular (UP) coalition, and the working class movement itself were fundamentally identical in strategy if not in tactics. Subtler analyses have made distinctions among these three elements and suppose a certain degree of independent development. Yet nowhere is recent Chilean history examined in the light of the essential characteristic of this period — that is, working class autonomy and self-mobilization.

The working class in Chile is generally pictured as the grateful and dependent clientele of a well-intentioned socialist regime that was democratically elected in late 1970 and undemocratically dismissed in late 1973. The distortion is a subtly dangerous one. First, the fanfare surrounding the rise and fall of the Allende regime hides a wave of class struggle whose beginnings predate the regime by three years. Second, the struggle itself is characterized in such a way as to obscure the two autonomously developed forms that emerged in the late sixties: the refusal to work (destruction of productivity) and the direct re-appropriation of production (the toma and the control over distribution).

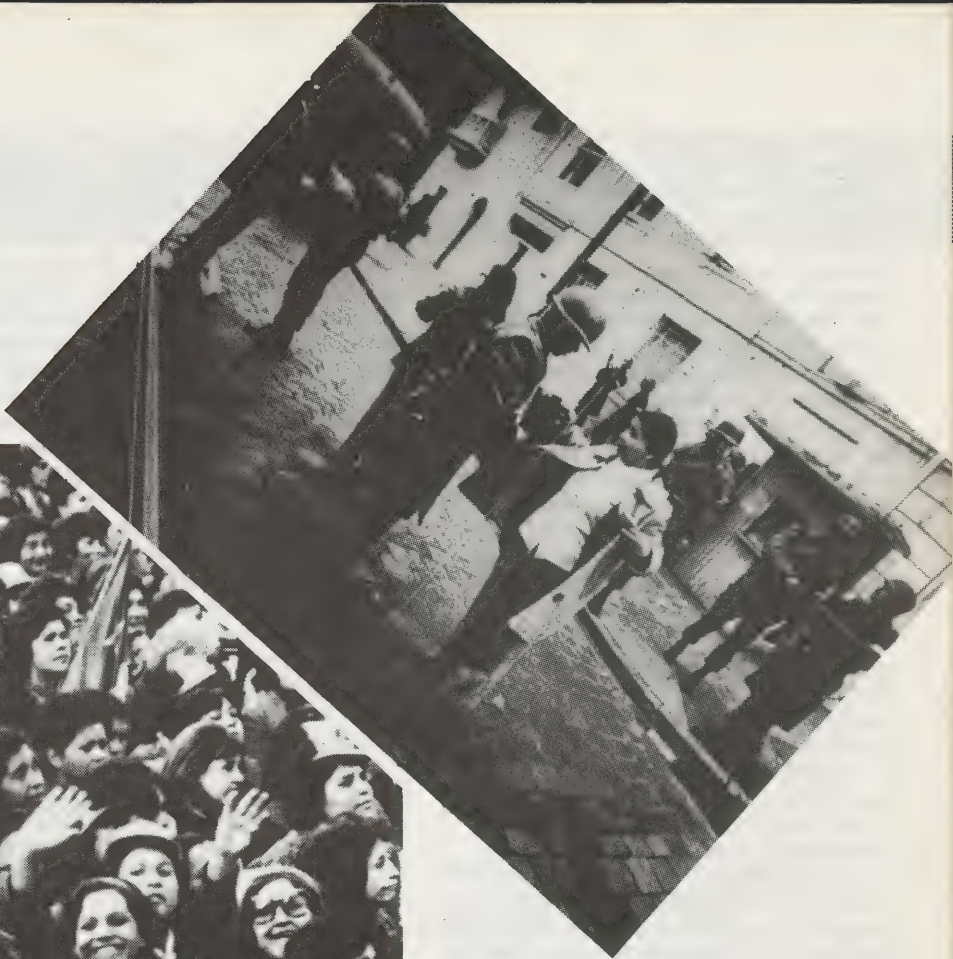
U.P. Rise to Power

To understand the course of the struggle during these years and the leftist 'miracle' of the UP's rise to power in 1970, it is necessary to do a little history. The struggle in 1967 drew its strength from the failure of the Frei regime to raise labour productivity and accelerate development through a set of reforms based on the Alliance for Progress model of the Kennedy-Johnson era. State-sponsored unionization, income redistribution (through wage increases and price controls), and agrarian reform typified the reform package of the Christian Democrat government during the years 1964-66. The progress of the UP, presented in 1970, was nothing more than a resurrection of the same reforms with almost no elements of originality apart from the vague promise of 'profound structural changes'. Unfortunately for the Christian Democrats, they achieved anything but the desired results. On the one hand, economic growth (GNP) continued to stagnate in spite of increased foreign indebtedness due to expenditures in technology and food imports for worker consumption. (By 1971, foreign indebtedness per capita in Chile was among the highest in the world.) On the other hand, the organizational possibilities offered by the Christian Democrat government's unionization campaign were quickly taken advantage of to raise demands for wages and improved working conditions, particularly in those sectors of the working class that had traditionally been unorgani-

zed, i.e. housewives (Centros de Madres), permanent farm workers (Sindicatos Campesinos) and Mapuche Indians (Asociaciones Mapuches). By 1967, the organization of productivity that was the expected result of the unionization campaign was subverted and transformed into the organization of struggle. When the Allende regime embarked on a similar political-economic programme, the working class responded on an even wider and more subversive scale that made a shambles of productivity and development.

The unoriginal response of the Frei regime to its own lack of success was the application of 'mano dura' ('the heavy hand'), beginning in late 1967 and continuing up until it was displaced by the UP coalition. During the years 1968-70 open confrontations between the working class and capital in Chile occurred daily and involved the entirety of the class. On the side of the industrial workers, the national strike called by the Central Unica de Trabajadores (CUT) in late 1967, in defense of the right to strike and against the establishment of the so-called Capitalization Fund (Abajo los Chirimo-yos) marked the beginning of a wave of strikes unparalleled in Chilean labour history. During the four years prior to the Allende regime there were well over 5,000 officially recorded labour disputes, some peaceful, some not. Assassination of workers in the national strike of 1967 and during the strike at the El Salvador copper mine (1968) made clear the underlying

LE ing Class Socialism



tonality of the Frei regime's 'mano dura' period, itself a reflection of the increasing militarization of these workers' struggles. The arming of the struggle in the late sixties had more than a passing influence on the selection of a president to succeed Frei. By 1970, the demilitarizing and demobilizing aspects of the UP's 'peaceful transition to socialism' model had become especially attractive to capital in Chile and eventually resulted in Christian Democrat support for Allende's candidacy.

Other sectors of the working class were also actively pushing forward demands at an accelerated pace. Tens of thousands of families without homes banded together to seize urban lands on which to set up shacks in a nationwide assault on real estate. Junior high school and high school students were spending more time in demonstrations and spontaneous vacations than inside the classrooms. In the countryside, the 'toma' or seizure of land became an increasingly widespread form of struggle, in addition to the already high rate of work stoppages among agricultural workers. The first national farmworkers' strike on 12 May 1970 underlined the ambiguous success of the unionization campaign in that particular sector. Centred at the Universidad de Concepcion in 1968, the university student movement produced the energy and the militants of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR). The first target of their activism, the Mapuche Indians of the south of Chile, were already gathering momentum for a drive to re-take their

farming lands. During these years, the low level bureaucrats of the judicial branch of government found the strength and the necessity to strike for higher wages.

In 1970, after four years of 'mano dura', the results in terms of development were even bleaker than after the reform years of 1964-66. Both productivity and total production began to decline at a pace that placed Chile's international creditworthiness in serious danger. It appeared that North American and European financial circles no longer felt confident in bankrolling what was becoming more and more a losing operation. The Christian Democrats were out.

The Unidad Popular coalition, on the other hand, had three things to offer. It promised to raise production and productivity, defuse working class militancy, and attract foreign investment from the yet untapped socialist bloc. The specific points of the coalition's political-economic programme derived from capital's need to deal with the demands of a more intransigent working class. *The answer to capital's crisis in Chile was called the Chilean Road to Socialism.*

Party as Agent

The socialist experiment sought to establish a cooperative alliance between the State and the working class, would-be partners in a radically new programme of national economic development. For its part, the State offered nationalization of private enterprise, planning, and worker

participation in the management of production. In its role, the working class was both the agent and the ultimate beneficiary of its own increased productivity to the degree that it began to exercise control over production.

Neither the self-management nor the other elements in this scheme was particularly radical or new, as they had already been set forth in Frei's reform package of 1964-66. What gave the resurrection of this reform package a novel touch was the use of the political parties of the Left (mainly the Communist and Socialist Parties) to interpret and mediate working class demands vis-a-vis the State where the same parties formed the ruling coalition. At the level of the workplace, the role of the workers' parties was to guarantee production by means of the imposition of the party over party member. Where the Christian Democrats had opted for the expansion of the unions to achieve this end, the UP coalition chose the workers' parties as its organizational instrument.

The parties thought to use the workers; what happened instead was that the workers used the parties. Their opportunistic manipulation of the parties to express demands for income became one of the major lines of struggle during the Allende years. In 1971, the first year of the Allende regime, the drive to reduce unemployment served to absorb idle productive capacity in state-controlled industries while at the same time providing the basis for a massive featherbedding campaign. Jobs, or rather the income they represented, had suddenly become available without the usual high level of competition among job seekers. Since jobs were distributed according to a quota system that assigned to each party in the UP

coalition a certain number of positions, the usual procedure was to sign up or convert to the party that offered the highest chances of securing the job sought. As time went on, this sort of opportunism became widespread not only in the factories but in other sectors of the class as well. Its limits were reached when the practice became so routinized and institutionalized that the only way to get anything was 'through the party'.

In spite of ferocious attacks against the subversion of their own objectives, the parties and the unions were powerless to enforce a high level of productivity in the workplaces. To expel a worker and party member for tardiness, absenteeism, or poor workmanship was politically difficult although not impossible. Besides, to have purged all the bad soldiers in a losing 'battle for production' would have depleted the ranks entirely. Absenteeism reached record highs and the so-called labour discipline collapsed. Not surprisingly, visiting technicians from the socialist bloc were appalled by what they saw.

By the time a group of bourgeois women had come out onto the streets, beating on empty pots and pans in protest at the general decline in productivity, it was clear that the honeymoon of the first year was over. Inflation had embarked on a whirlwind course that placed Chile at the top of the international inflation lineup and made short shrift of the wage and salary gains won through income redistribution policies. The response of the Allende government was to abandon the fight against inflation and begin the battle for production, a heavy handed ideological attack on the working class urging it to work more and produce more. When the official labour movement finally did call a general strike, the workers were asked to work on a Saturday to make up for the lost working time.

For their part, the workers accelerated the rhythm of factory and farm seizures and strikes, provoking numerous confrontations with the government, the parties that formed the UP coalition, and the official labour movement. In a situation where inflation tended to obliterate the already fragile relationship between wages and productivity, the call to produce more was doomed to fall on deaf ears. Workers who had direct access to products both in the factories and on the farms, began to appropriate greater and greater quantities of the goods they produced as their real purchasing power fell lower and lower. Official and unofficial payment-in-kind arrangements became very popular, especially among the self-managing, reformed farm units (Centros de Reforma Agraria), where State and party control was weaker. The farmworkers received credit, seed, and fertilizer from State agencies and in most cases they either consumed their own production or sold it through other than State channels, contrary to what originally had been contracted.

Women Intervene

The ultimate expression of the demand for goods and income without regard to productivity came in that sector that did

not have direct access to the goods being produced, namely the housewives. Through nationalization, the State had acquired control over the distribution of about one-third of the consumer goods available in Chile. At first, the Allende government had offered to the women the Juntas de Abastecimiento y Precios (JAP) and the possibility of supervising the controlled prices that individual merchants were charging. Although women participated in this programme, they demanded more: total and direct control over distribution, without the mediation of merchants or political parties. During the truckers' and merchants' strike of October, 1972, all the fronts on which the struggle had been waged up to that point were reduced to one: the control over distribution. Groups of men, under pressure from wives and mothers, forced open stores and distributed their stocks to waiting crowds. Food industries delivered directly to working class communities and sold at official prices in line with workers' budgets.

On the basis of the October merchants' strike, housewives in the community pushed beyond the task of price supervision to take over that third of Chile's consumption (including imports) that the State had controlled. Through the mechanism of the popular supermarket, the women distributed low priced rations of basic foodstuffs and sometimes clothing among their own families in amounts that varied according to family size. In one neighbourhood, where supplies had run low several months after the October strike, the entire stock of a privately-owned supermarket was stolen after a mass assault.

Not only were food and other basic items of consumption brought into the realm of struggle but so were living space and housing. The occupation of nearly completed apartment buildings and the distribution of individual apartment units followed a similar pattern to that of food. The women who were left during the day to defend their squatting rights were not adverse to manipulating State housing agencies and the political parties to gain a certain legitimacy for the occupation. Contrary to what the Left has said, Chilean housewives (apart from a small group of bourgeois women) did not constitute a reactionary opposition to the Allende regime.

The Beginning of the End

The growing power of women and of the working class movement in general had disastrous implications for the Allende regime. Its last year was one long string of political crises set off by autonomous working class militancy. The socialist experiment had produced the exact opposite of its own stated objectives. Where the UP coalition had intended to give a very measured inch, the working class took at least a few miles. Women who had never figured very conspicuously in the socialist model, made their presence felt. Workers' Control and other reforms in the hierarchy of the workplace were immediately seized upon by the workers in order to work less and get

more. The refusal of workers to cooperate in development schemes made planning impossible. The lack of labour discipline smashed the UP's secret hopes of attracting aid from the socialist bloc as reward for realignment within the international context. As far as capital was concerned, Chile had become absolutely uncredit-worthy.

The October strike was the beginning of the end. In order to open the stores before the workers did, Allende called upon the military. Shortly after, with the support of the Allende government, the infamous gun control law was passed. Under the pretext of searching for illegally possessed arms, the military invaded nearly every factory in the country to assure itself that the workers would be capable of offering little resistance to the frontal assault that was to come. While Allende asked for dialogue with the Christian Democrats and preached against civil war; the army engineered a fake coup to test out working class defenses.

On 29 June 1973, the day of the fake coup, six tanks rolled in front of the presidential palace and killed an undetermined number of civilians. When Allende heard the news, he came on the radio and in a shaky voice he ordered the workers to seize the factories, the farmworkers their farms, and the students their schools. He promised guns if the need should arise, although it apparently never did. The army went on to squash its own fake coup and to try to appear as the saviour of Allende's 'government of the workers'. At a demonstration called that evening, Allende tried to pass off the Chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Police, and Detectives as friends of the people. Not convinced, the crowd demanded the closing of the Congress and an end to bourgeois legality the Allende government had preserved. Allende refused, trying to ignore the fact that almost all lines of production had been taken over and a long strike had begun.

In the weeks that followed, the government and the UP coalition parties did what they could to have the factories restored to their owners and put into production, to make the schools function as before, to make the country run. Compromise at that point was impossible. Only the consolidation of the counter-revolution and the massacre of many thousands of working class militants that began on 11 September, 1973 could disrupt the strike and restore the possibility of social peace to Chile.

By : Leoncio

...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

Black Nurses

Sir,

I must comment on Grace Jenkin's remark, 'I find nurses are very conscious of what position they hold — even some black ones'. It is the norm for one to be conscious of one's position. Admittedly, since the Salmon structure was implemented, all nurses have become more conscious of their status. Black nurses are not inferior to their white colleagues; it would be a myth to think that status was not important to them. However, all grades of staff play a vital role in the running of the National Health Service and should be treated with equal respect.

The medical field is becoming more technical each day. In future recruits entering the profession as a vocation or for other reasons would need high educational qualifications. Staff already trained must keep abreast of modern discoveries. In order to have an effective service all members of staff must work as a team complementing each other.

The reasons for the present discontentment among nurses are numerous. The financial side is only a part of it, and an increase in salary (although necessary) would not solve the critical situation. Today more than ever peoples' attitudes are changing. They, especially the younger ones, are prepared to fight for social changes. Therefore it is not surprising that nursing personnel recruited in recent years would not tolerate a system which they do not agree with. I mention below a few reasons for discontentment:

- Low salaries
- Insufficient finance in the service
- Inadequate manpower
- The changes which resulted from the Salmon structure, too many chiefs and not enough workers
- Reorganisation of the NHS
- Non-nursing duties which nurses have to do
- Conditions of employment, e.g. little or no consideration given to past experience when rejoining the profession
- Little or no consultation with staff at lower levels before making decisions which affect them
- Badly planned duty rota

The result is frustration, little or no job satisfaction, lack of confidence in the present system. But more important still, patient care is deteriorating.

In order to hasten governmental investigation the Agency nurses were victimised. I appreciate the fact that black nurses must be cautious about participating in the present struggle. However, if black nurses have any interest in the service they are offering and in improving their present situation, now is the time for action. The method they choose to achieve their objectives depends on them. Gone are the days when you accept directives from the hierarchy without question, especially if

you are not in agreement with them. Individually little will be achieved but collectively a great deal will be obtained.

I emigrated to this country with my parents twelve years ago. After completing my secondary education, I entered the nursing profession as a vocation. My chosen career was not influenced by teachers or career officers. However, I recollect vividly my interview with a career officer. She did not inform me about other professions; also the difference between the two types of training was not explained to me. I was aware of the difference and stated quite definitely that I was not interested in the two year course (SEN). It is a well known fact that in schools, black females are not given adequate information about various careers. They are channelled into the nursing profession (mainly the SEN course) or secretarial field.

I was fairly contented during my training. Obviously I encountered some racial prejudice mainly they were of a minor nature, e.g. verbal reports being directed to my junior white colleague when I was in charge. I trained in a rural area. There were approximately 25 black nurses, no black doctors, no ancillary staff.

Every year several black qualified SEN nurses apply for the SRN training. Many are denied the opportunity because they are black. Promotion is attained on passing examinations to the level of staff nurse. Many black nurses achieve this. A minority are appointed as sisters. Promotion above that level for black nurses is virtually impossible.

I left the nursing profession two years ago. I entered the field of preventive medicine. My reasons for leaving were personal, financial and social.

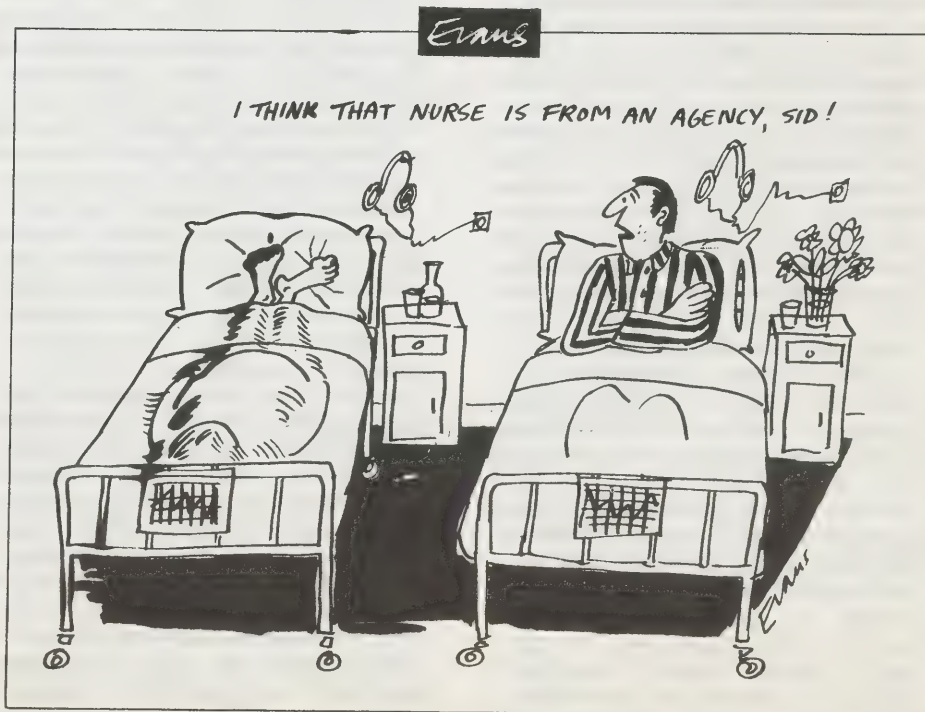
E. Campbell

Sir,

Having read the Black Women's Collective's article on nursing several times, I am still at a loss to understand quite why the authors believe Agency nurses to 'represent the spearhead of the force for change in the National Health Service'. And, apart from a love of contentiousness, I see little justification in the content of the article for the labelling of the International Socialists, the Hospital Worker and the National Rank and File Organising Committee as 'racist and anti-working class'. And the climactic sentence, 'racism and sexism are not about abstract moral attitudes, but about whether you take position with black women, agency or non-agency, auxiliary, SRN or SEN' is, in fact, singularly moral and abstract.

It is most certainly true that the hospitals are riddled with racism and sexual division. It is undoubtedly true that the hospital union leaders have played an exceptionally deceitful role, even by the general standards of the union bureaucracy, not only in their strike but in the 1973 ancillaries' strike, in the struggle against bonus schemes. Read the *Hospital Worker*. But I certainly don't think that the way to fight back is walking out of the union, leaving the hospital and getting super-exploited by agencies who quite literally make tens of thousands out of the disintegration of the health service. To simply designate a group of workers the revolutionary vanguard because they are black and cynical about unions and management seems rather bizarre. Underneath all the pompous formulations, all the article says is that people who stand aloof from collective action, who reject trade unionism, who are used as scabs during disputes and who avoid struggle, are mysteriously transmogrified into the revolutionary.

SOCIALIST WORKER



...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

vanguard, because the Black Women's Collective says so. According to this logic the eventual destruction of the Industrial Relations Act ought to be attributed to James Goad, the scab from Sudbury. This exercise in theoretical sophistication may impress the editor of *Race Today*; it does not take in the companies who run the agencies who understand exactly what is going on. The annual report of one such company, Crowthalls, stated last year: 'The strength of our management and supervisory structure was highlighted during the recent industrial dispute when the company was able to maintain its essential services and provide valuable support in a period of considerable difficulty'. That is, we make money out of breaking strikes.

David Widgery

Black Women's Group Replies

Sir,

The response from groups and individuals to the article, 'Black Women and Nursing - A Job Like Any Other', and the points of view expressed in it, have been wide and varied. The major difficulty has been over what we say about the agency nurse, whom, as BPFM quite rightly identify, is most ruthlessly exploited by the agencies she works through. These agencies clearly reap their enormous profits by exploiting in the main black women with children who have to work whether or not there is a man.

The ever-increasing number of agencies in the big cities over the last ten years shows the extent of time that this situation has existed unchecked, not only by successive Governments, but by those organisations who claim to represent the interests of healthservice workers, particularly COHSE and NUPE. From these quarters there has been no agitation around the drop in pay scale that nurses are faced with if they break their service for whatever reason; there has been no substantial campaign for suitable hours and shifts of work, and no action on the glaring absence of child-care facilities. These are the weaknesses of the agency nurse that expose a tradition of unions organising to the exclusion of women.

Agency nurses are not taking a stand against the NHS, and we did not intend to imply that they are. In fact, they are in no position to do so, deprived as they are of the relative security of the NHS. The terms of the current struggle make it appear that agency nurses and NHS nurses have a conflict of interest that can only be solved in the banning of the weaker - the agency nurse. We believe that the problems that give rise to the agency nurse are facing all nurses (and women) from the student nurse right through all the various categories in the

NHS. What we would like to see is the NHS nurses lending their power to the agency nurse, thereby challenging at a fundamental level the whole existence of the sexist/racist nature of the NHS, to make it work for those who work in it, and those women forced to leave it.

The failure of all those who claim to be concerned about the plight of nurses is that they have never identified who the agency nurse is. Our article went some way towards identifying who these agency nurses are - housewives, often black, with children who do agency work, not through choice or for money, but as a way of organising around their powerlessness as housewives, having to do waged work.

Some confusion appears to have generated around what we mean by '... the agency nurse has represented the spearhead for the force for change in the National Health Service'. Some choose to interpret this as meaning that we see agency nurses as a revolutionary vanguard, presumably because those who say it have reserved this position for themselves, or feel that they alone can choose who is. The clearest expression of this is to be found in David Widgery's letter, which in our view embodies the perspective of a particular section of the black and white left who believe that the only form of workers' struggle against capitalism they recognise is through the unions - fighting its bureaucracy.

When we say: 'Agency nurses represent the spearhead for the force for change in the NHS', we mean that, the way which they have to work shows what is possible for all women - freedom from the hospital hierarchy and all the blackmail that goes with it, refusing to do work for which they were not recruited, choosing hours that suit their domestic commitments.

While the agency nurse is isolated off and presented as the enemy and not as an ally, mischief can always be made over the question of scabbing. Traditionally, it has always been the weaker worker who has been forced to scab. When black workers first came to Britain they were often used in this way - because they had no power and therefore no choice. And what of the immigrant student nurse whose stay in this country is dependent on her good behaviour, i.e. not participating in any militant action. To pose that the solution for agency nurses is to join unions is to completely ignore the common experience of black and immigrant workers, which is, that the trade unions have not only refused to support them but have actively opposed any collective action taken by groups of black workers. The most recent example of the Union (T&GWU) behaving in this way is Imperial Typewriters. Scabbing has traditionally been the most heinous crime within the white working class movement. However, when white workers scab in the face of strikes led by Black and immigrant wor-

kers, the position of the unions gives them added power to scab with impunity.

Black and immigrant women in Britain today have a history of rebellion and resistance in the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa against the murderous brutality and exploitation of slavery and imperialism. This historical experience flows directly into her total experience as a woman worker in Britain where her fight continues. *But these experiences are deliberately made invisible, rather than being seen as a source of tremendous power for other sections of the working class movement.*

The white left in Britain continues to patronise the black movement with its calls for solidarity whenever black people are forced to take a stand for themselves. Being 'in solidarity' means they regard these struggles and the form they take as a quirk, and not as a serious contribution to the working class movement.

The autonomous organisation of the black movement was in direct opposition to the racism of the organisations of the white movement, trade unions and the extra-parliamentary left, and their attempts to deny us any power for ourselves. But while Black Power focused attention on our resistance, the black woman's experience has remained an exotic mystery. And thus, black women, below all, have suffered the burden of having their struggles made invisible.

To say, as we do, that the historical experience and the present day experience of black women's resistance is *central* to any working class struggle, is to make a break with all those people and organisations, black and white, who fail to see this. The existence of the Black Women's group is one result. We have used the occasion of the nurses' struggle (which we see as crucial to all women) to expose a struggle that black women are making and what it has meant for the NHS in Britain. Our view, and the position we take was informed not by any abstract theories, but by the black nurses, agency and non-agency, who participated.

Class And Nationalism

Sisters and Brothers,

Brother Walter Rodney's paper to the Sixth Pan African Congress is crucial. His starting point is so different from, say, Mwalimu Nyerere's near triumphalism. Nyerere encounters only success along the path from 1945 to 1974. He itemises there are 'people's governments of African and Caribbean states'.

'The struggle against colonialism and racialism has made great progress.' Also, 'great progress in the human rights movement'. Nyerere concedes that: 'in economic matters our advance has been much slower', but having analysed the problem

...BACKLASH ...BACKLASH

as 'that of oppression arising from an exploitative system . . . we remain poor

because of the world trading and monetary systems' he suggests that a technical operation is all that is needed.

'Within Africa and the Caribbean, economic co-operation between states has made some headway', and further afield, 'Third World countries are working together on an ad hoc basis — at UNCTAD conferences, in negotiations with the EEC and in other necessary centres'. Such historical analyses as this class undertakes shows that 'we have, in other words, made advances in all fields'. Time, technocracy and diplomacy will carry the day. Long live the OAU, the group of 77, neo-colonialism; Power to the People.

In the face of this brave new world, brother Walter flings his contention that the peoples of Africa 'have scored no victories in ending exploitation and inequality'. In fact social differentials and the extraction of surplus by foreign capital have both increased.

When brother Walter writes of the African ruling class that 'they lack both the vision and the objective base to essay the leap towards continental unity', he is at once laying bare an important tactic of the colonial and neo-colonial systems — the attribution of dynamism to groups whom they domesticate — and reinforcing a progressive line of brothers Frantz Fanon and Amílcar Cabral — that historical initiative has been wrested from and must be recaptured by the producing classes.

One or two considerations may be raised from brother Rodney's paper: that the nationalist trend was initiated by imperialism; that methodological and class factors predetermine the revolutionary capacity of nationalist movements; that the methodology for a People's Pan-Africa needs to be worked at.

In the Caribbean, where our house slave 'running' class services the twinned contradictions with varied efficiency, the Pan-African Congress threatened to at least embarrass this class. Thanks, however, to the geographical spread of the colonial experience, the continental class membership was on hand to defend its interests. It happened that, for example, the rabid Anti Africa, nationalist ruler of Grenada attended the Congress and no member of the peoples' movements.

Brother Walter's contentions are often political dynamite. In 1968, they sparked off a Jamaica government ban on him — and as a result, an uprising by progressive urban elements. Already, his application to return to teach at Guyana University has had to be reconsidered on a government directive. When a contention is right on target, the enemy panics. But when that contention becomes a material force, something has to give.

A. Oscar St. Vincent

European Workers

Sir,

From the description by the Spanish worker in last month's *Race Today*, the McVitie's plant in West London seems similar to the one in Harlesden where I work. Again, there are about 2,000 workers. The bulk of the work is packing, and this is done in the daytime and evenings by women, most of whom are immigrants — not so often Asian as Irish and West Indian, there are also a fair number of Africans. The workers in the ovens room and mixing room and on the pallets are men — West Indian, African, Asian, and, often, European immigrants. Most of the engineers and many of the stock handlers are white, English, male workers. The night shift is almost entirely male, even on the tedious 'women's work' of packing; again, most of these workers are black or Southern European.

The sharpest division in the plant seems to me to be between men and women. Our work, as usual, requires more continuous effort than the men's, and our pay, however, is due to the fact that the men can do overtime and go home to a cooked meal. While the overtime hours that the women put in are done at home and are not paid. This difference in our relative positions in society is also reflected in our social relations at work — in the catcalls and grabs that make women reluctant to go into the mixing room, in the way we are expected to sweep up after the men, in the bearing of the ovenman who comes to one line when the chargehand is away and tells the women to get on with the packing.

In addition to the three shifts, the Barcelona worker describes, there are several part-time shifts during the day, starting and finishing at different hours, to enable women to complete the work McVities expects us to do at home, and also fit in a few hours of labour for wages. These shifts are timed to fit in with the breaks of the full time workers. As the interview describes, McVitie's prime concern is to keep the machinery running. Sometimes it seems this is as much for the purposes of discipline as to wring out the last drops of profit: they'll keep it running even if it's only producing rejects which will later have to be unwrapped.

Most of the plant is not run on these lines. It is, they tell us proudly, the biggest biscuit factory in Europe, and it then describes accurately the incredibly high turnover, but it underestimates our strength when it suggests '... McVities are always able to find a similar number of new workers needing money, so they are alright'. There is considerable unemployment in this area, but many of those employed are not interested in the jobs being offered. This means employers are always having to advertise for wor-

kers, and if a worker doesn't like her wages, or a chargehand gets rude, she can always take her cards next door. Women in particular, especially young women without children, quickly decide it's time for a change. This undoubtedly sets wage rates, and forces management's hand on conditions inside.

Management has even gone so far as to try on one line a form of workers control, in a rather comical attempt to get the women personally involved in the packing of cheese savories.

Like the management, the union at Harlesden tries to appear benevolent. They give out union cards and newspapers freely, negotiate rises, and sometimes side with a worker in disputes. Fundamentally, though, their role is as it is everywhere, to grease the wheels for management, to help them eliminate those excesses in pay and treatment which mostly get workers' backs up.

In those cases where trades unions have, for a time, put up real (if limited) fights against managements, they have been forced to do so by British male workers who, unencumbered by the extra exploitation which women and immigrants face, can concentrate all their power on workplace battles. The union's fight has always been to force management to accommodate the demands of these workers: women and immigrants are excluded from the struggle and the victory is often at our expense. At McVities, where native males are a small minority, a victory at our expense would be no victory at all.

In the article on trades unions which opens that section of *Race Today*, the Action Committee of European Immigrant Workers appears worried that the trades union movement may not recognise the problems of immigrant workers before they turn away to form organisations of their own. The women at McVities nurse no hopes that the union, however, advanced they and the management and machinery they work with may be, will respond to our needs or lend strength to the ways we resist. What does the union know or care about our unpaid housework, the conditions on the 'mum's line', the extra labour forced on immigrants in this country? How can they see high turnover or willful unemployment as anything but problems?

I have to take issue with the Action Committee and hope that 'ideas of a separate organisation' — separate, that is, from trade unions and the whole concept of trade unionism — 'really start to take a solid foothold'. The degree to which these organisations will also have to be separate from male workers, or from British workers, these workers will determine every day by their actions.

E.H.

ATTACK ON THE SIXTH PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS

The following communique was sent from the Caribbean Steering Committee (which was excluded from the recent Sixth Pan African Congress) to the organisers of that Conference (see RACE TODAY, August 1974). THE CALL, to which the statement refers, was published in RACE TODAY, February 1974.

It is with a sense of loss that the Caribbean non-governmental delegation learned that they cannot attend the historic gathering in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, because of the ban imposed by persons who had the power to do so.

Our Steering Committee has member organisations from St. Vincent, (Organisation for Black Cultural Awareness); Antigua, (Afro-Caribbean Liberation Movement); Grenada, (New Jewel Movement); Guyana, (ASCRIA); Trinidad and Tobago, (NJAC); Barbados, (Peoples Progressive Movement); Cayenne, (National Front for the Liberation of Cayenne); Bermuda, and Jamaica.

The membership of our Steering Committee includes two international sponsors, C.L.R. James and Eusi Kwayana, who have letters acknowledging the part they played in developing the previous conception of the Congress and the help they gave in its organisation.

Of great significance is the fact that the membership of the Caribbean Steering Committee comprises organisations long committed to Pan Africanism and social revolution. They are organisations which have come into conflict with the regimes because they, as organisations, dared to uphold the very principles of *The Call*.

In spite of the open differences of theory and practice between us and many regimes both in the Caribbean and Africa, we consented to the proposal originating, we were told, in Tanzania, that each African and Caribbean Head of State be invited to serve as a Patron of

the Congress. Our Regional Co-ordinator, in his capacity as Sponsor, recommended to the Secretary General that the Prime Minister of Cuba could not be excluded.

To shorten your labour, we shall quote only from crucial documents which because of their authorship and presentation were intended to implement the objective of the conference.

It would be expected that any change in the structure of the conference would have accompanied or preceded the invitation of Official Patrons. All that was laid down by the International Steering Committee was that each Government would be allowed to send one official representative.

To crown it all, the Secretary General's *Briefing Paper* issued after the addition of Patrons reinforced the original conceptions of the Sixth Pan African Congress as basically a *people's congress*. The *Briefing Paper* later published in *Black World* (U.S.A.) stated:

'Each of the regions is responsible for raising delegations to the Sixth Pan African Congress. In addition all African and Caribbean Governments are being extended an invitation to participate with their respective Heads of State requested to serve as Patrons of the Congress.'

But the focus and nature of the Sixth Pan African Congress is non-Governmental.'

There are other relevant documents, such as the Secretary General's message to the Guyana Preparatory conference in December 1973, which charged the con-

ference with the election of a Steering Committee and assigned it a quota of thirty-five (35) 'non-governmental delegates and five (5) observers.'

The Guyana Conference inserted the item 'The Caribbean Reality' on the unsatisfactory agenda prepared by the Secretary General, because that agenda did not permit participants to carry one of the objectives set for the conference, the raising of 'the political concerns' of participants. During the discussion on this item 'The Caribbean Reality' the following areas were examined in depth.

One, the breakup of the old Caribbean and the rise of a new, using Antigua and Trinidad & Tobago as case studies.

Two, the position of C.L. R. James that the Caribbean region was not 'neo-colonial' but 'colonial'.

Three, the use of the machinery of the old colonial state by the post-independence regimes to repress the masses.

Four, the relevance to Third World peoples of the new institutions thrown up by the revolutionary movements in Trinidad & Tobago, Antigua and Guyana.

Five, the independent countries of the Caribbean, with particular reference to Guyana, as bridges between imperialism and the revolutionary countries of the Third World.

Six, the continued existence of British, French, Dutch and U.S. empires in the Caribbean region.

It is totally false to say that any of the examinations made at this meeting constituted a personal attack on any person

whatsoever.

The keynote address had been given by C.L.R. James, who held out Tanzania as a model of socialist transformation with commitment, and as a country where the excesses of the elite were being combatted by the people with the support of the ruling party, TANU.

At the end of February the Secretary General, Courtland Cox, and Brother Mapunda of TANU arrived in Guyana. They said their mission had to do with protests to President Nyerere and to the Secretary General by the Prime Minister of Guyana and the Minister of Information and Culture respectively. The Guyana authorities later said to Courtland Cox and C.L.R. James in Guyana that it was not they who complained but that protests against the Congress had come first from Tanzania.

During this visit in February 1974, Brother Mapunda outlined the difficulties faced by his country. The only solution he could see was a 'reinterpretation' of *The Call*. We did not understand this proposal and rejected it.

The Secretary General returned to Guyana to attend a meeting of the Steering Committee fixed by us on dates available to him. At that meeting he said that unless TANU could be satisfied about what we were going to say at the Congress, TANU might frown on our attendance.

We well understand that a host country would have concerns about the conduct of a conference. But we could see the Caribbean delegation only as a dele-

gation equal in status to any other delegation participating in the Sixth Pan African Congress. We could not accept the status of an inferior Caribbean and South American Region.

The Secretary General since the April Steering Committee meeting in Guyana has not communicated to us any vital decisions, except that the congress had been re-scheduled to June 19-27, 1974.

Mr. Cox's undertaking, given orally and in writing to inform us how much travel assistance would be available to the Caribbean delegation has never been kept. He has never communicated to us the decision of the Super Committee to bar our delegation from attendance. He has refused to reply to urgent cables on these two questions.

On 4 May 1974, a cable from Courtland Cox, Dar-es-Salaam, was delivered to Eusi Kwayana, co-ordinator of the Caribbean and South American region. It said: 'Ambassador Salin will arrive in Guyana soon with full details. Please consult. Letter follows.'

The arrival of Ambassador Salim did not take place and the letter did not follow.

There has been a suggestion in official quarters that the cable did not originate from the Secretariat in Dar-es-Salaam, or that the facts contained in it were authorised.

That possibility reinforces our conviction that all of these manoeuvres resulting in our exclusion would be explained in one phase - Imperialism - that same Imperialism which has harassed our main

Caribbean associates in the United States, through the FBI and which has subjected our contacts to ceaseless interrogation on the Caribbean Steering Committee.

What is our position with regard to the meeting taking place in Dar-es-Salaam from 19 to 27 June?

'We see it not as a meeting of African people and their allies, but as a Government-dominated meeting, which is not the meeting as conceived by and of the Sponsors.'

We demand that the Liberation Movements, whatever their concept of the conference, be given full scope for the expression of what they wish to present. We demand that the small Brazilian people's delegation led by Abdias do Nascimento be accorded full status.

We condemn the heightened treachery of those Black men who have voted to exclude a section of the Black revolution, which had previously agreed to invite Governments.

We condemn the exclusion of the representatives of the people of Latin America, Cayenne, Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Martinique, the U.S., and the Caribbean empire, from the meeting.

We, however, wish that the positive and genuine elements at the Dar-es-Salaam meeting will prevent our negative elements and that the meeting will "recreate in African a climate hostile to Imperialism", and deliver crushing blows against the enemies of African people and all oppressed mankind.'



Daily News Tanzania

REVIEWS

History of the Working Class in the 20th Century (Trinidad and Tobago)

Bukkha Rennie

New Beginning Movement, Toronto, 1974.

Bukkha Rennie's *History of the Working Class in the 20th Century (Trinidad and Tobago)*, published by the Toronto Chapter of New Beginning Movement, is the eighth in the current series of popular booklets being published by the Trinidad Organisation, and is by far the most important and substantial work to have come out of the Trinidad Revolution so far. Covering the history of working class self activity and the self organisation in Trinidad from 1919 to 1956, Rennie's book succeeds in breaking completely new ground in a number of ways.

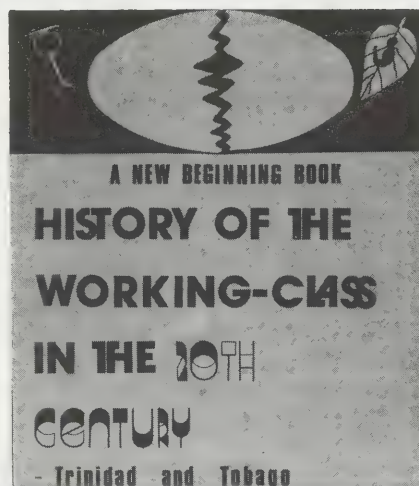
Told from the perspective of the activists, rather than that of the academics, the history of working class militancy in Trinidad from the year of the Waterfront Strike (which signalled the emergence of the working class as an independent social force) to the year of Williams' rise to power (which marked the end of working class self organisation and the take-over of the anti-colonial movement by the professional middle-class for a whole generation), unfolds in all its richness and creativity.

We are taken through the rise and fall of the Trinidad Working Men's Association (TWA), led by Cipriani in the '20s and early '30s, the explosive period of the late '30s, which saw the emergence of new leadership and new organisations, in particular the Negro Welfare Association (NWA) and the Butler movement, the slow demise of the revolutionary militancy of the working class in the '40s; and finally the emergence of the middle-class as an important social force in the anti-colonial movement, culminating in the rise of Williams in the '50s. In stressing the centrality of working class struggles as the motive force in the social evolution of modern Trinidad and Tobago society, Rennie not only provides the present generation of working class activists with a sense of historical continuity (with the confidence that this brings). He also restores to Trinidad and indeed Caribbean historiography its revolutionary foundations.

The petit-bourgeois historians have been systematically negating this rich tradition of mass struggle, and have been viewing the development of this society purely in terms of the political manoeuvres of the colonial autocracy and the British Colonial Office. They have also been portraying the struggles of labour as if their only value lay in the fact that they laid the ground-work for the emergence of 'responsible' and 'educated' leadership in the '50s, meaning by that the bankrupt leadership of the professional middle classes, headed by their arch representative, the Oxford-educated Williams. In restoring the working masses to their rightful place as the creators of modern Trinidad and Tobago, Rennie

succeeds in placing the rise of the middle-class leadership in the '50s into its proper historical perspective, as a *setback* to the continuous development of working class creativity and militancy – a period which has since come to an end with the spectacular re-emergence of the masses on to the social stage in 1970 and since.

Once we situate ourselves within the self-activity of the working class and see the class not as objects but as subject of its own history, a number of current petit bourgeois myths about the creative capacity and ideological sophistication of the class come crumbling down. One persistent belief – that the workers are incapable of throwing up by themselves the most advanced forms of self-organisation in their battles with the colonial capitalist state – stands hopelessly exposed for what it is in the face of evidence such as the Negro Welfare Association



(NWA), a Marxist-oriented organisation in the '30s and '40s completely manned by working class activists with a degree of ideological and organisational sophistication which has yet to be equalled by any other political organisation since seen in Trinidad. The NWA, many of whose leaders like Jim Barrat and Bolton Johnson, and Christina King, are still alive in Trinidad, was widely recognised at the time as being in the vanguard of working class struggle particularly in North Trinidad. Arthur Lewis, in a forgotten pamphlet entitled *Labour in the West Indies* published by the Fabian Society in Britain in 1938, where he describes the background of the 1937-38 riots in the Caribbean for a British liberal readership, mentions the NWA as one of the central political forces in the Trinidad version of these region-wide riots.

Side by side with the better known Butler movement, based in the oilfields of South Trinidad, ironically through a combination of factors, the memory of the NWA has been, until Rennie's *History*, virtually wiped out from the consciousness of the society. None of the established histories of Trinidad society during this period have even so much as acknowledged its existence, much less its importance to the struggles of the working class in the

'30s and '40s. This is partly because of the national prominence achieved by the charismatic Butler, leader and spokesman for the Oil Workers in the South who were first to erupt in Trinidad in 1937 where the NWA had its major base among the workers in the North. The petit-bourgeois historian and social analyst with his propensity for viewing history as the creation of individual leaders, rather than as the movement of the *collective subjectivity of the masses*, and with his weakness for finding the facts only from the evidence given by public and official documents, rather than from the testimony of the actual participants within the class itself, has tended to treat this entire period of revolutionary activity in Trinidad and Tobago as the fruit of Butler's leadership, and the central role of the NWA has been completely erased from historical memory. Rennie, who bases his history on a wide series of interviews with working class activists of the period who are still alive, and in particular with the amazingly sophisticated leadership of NWA, has done the labour movement a great service by restoring the NWA to its rightful place in Trinidad labour history.

The fate of the NWA stands as a frightening testimony to the way in which whole periods of history can be distorted, and vital portions of social experience completely smothered once the writing and recording of history is left in the hands of a class which stands outside of the self-activity of the masses. Already, a similar process has begun to take place with the 1970 mass uprising in Trinidad. A number of myths and mystifications have begun to spring up in the writings of the foreign and local petit-bourgeois social analysts like the Lloyd Bests, the Ivaar Oxaals, and the Selwyn Ryans. The history of the 1970 uprising still remains to be told by those who were its direct participants. For the time being there are two current myths which have to be debunked as soon as possible: the myth that the mass uprising was 'organised' or 'led' by the student activist organisation, the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), and the myth that the oil workers stood aside from events of 1970 because they are a 'privileged' sector of the working class in Trinidad. NJAC was a vitally important element in the leadership of the social movement which exploded so suddenly in 1970, but the history of the scores of *self-organised* youth groups which suddenly surfaced throughout the society and of the role that they played in carrying the momentum of the spontaneous rebellion is still to be written. Throughout the eight weeks of mass upheaval, NJAC did not lead but fought bravely to *keep up* with the tremendous outburst of self-activity among the people, an outburst which was not simply the activity of a disorganised and amorphous crowd, but the consciously organised actions of large numbers of

self-organised youth groups all over the country.

It is this tradition of autonomous self-organisation among the unemployed in Trinidad which has found its highest social expression so far in the emergence of the National United Freedom Fighters (NUFF), the guerilla organisation. The myth of the 'passive' oil workers also has to be debunked and this can be done by simply recalling three vital facts. Throughout the upheaval the nationally recognised voice of the spontaneous mass movement was the *Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Oil Field Workers' Trade Union (OWTU), a fact which the petit-bourgeois analysts, for their own reasons, are trying hard to smother today.

Secondly, on the day of the army mutiny, the general council of the OWTU was on the verge of voting unanimously to call a strike of oil workers in sympathy with the rebellious soldiers, but this move was delayed through the deceit of reactionary members of the Trade Union executive, particularly Edwards and Beckles, who have since been exposed and thrown out of the union. Thirdly, throughout the eight weeks of the mass upheaval the leader of OWTU, George Weeks, was a prominent participant in all the mass demonstrations organised by NJAC.

In the process of resurrecting the memory of the forgotten NWA and recording the real history of working class activity in the pre-1956 period, Rennie also put an end to two widespread myths

about the Trinidad working class spread by the petit-bourgeoisie. The myth of the 'lack of internationalism in the Trinidad working class consciousness and the myth that the Caribbean community in exile is not a relevant participant in the struggles taking place in the islands.

Let us quote a few extracts:

Another factor which helped to build the revolutionary consciousness of the working community on the water front was its constant contact with the outer world. Many of the workers in the water front took jobs periodically on ships that plied the international waters. They saw how people lived, worked and organised abroad, especially the workers of the United States and Britain; they brought back literature that was passed from hand to hand as was done with the literature brought into the country by foreign sailors. Special mention must be made of Ferdinand Smith, a black Jamaican, one of two West Indians who helped to perfect the Trade Union Movement in the United States of America. He helped to organise the NAU, which was a fore-runner to the present CIO. Ferdinand Smith, originally a sailor, contacted all ships that came to the USA from the West Indies. He talked to the West Indian workers on board and sent literature back with them to be given away. He explained to them that the workers' struggle was an international one and gave them suggestions as to how they could better their conditions at home. A few years after 1919, Ferdinand Smith was banned from Trinidad. . . . It is also significant to note that most of the soldiers and leaders of the TWA were influenced by Garvey in early 1919 by Garvey's newspaper *The Negro World*, published in New York and widely distributed throughout the Caribbean, was

banned from Trinidad. However, copies from the United States shops were smuggled through the waterfront.

Between 1935 and 1936, the NWA held 'defence' meetings and demonstrations for Angelo Hurdon, a youth leader of the US who was framed and jailed for preaching revolution. For the nine Scottsboro boys who were framed sometime previously on rape charge and sentenced to jail for a total of over 100 years, for Mother-

bloor, a German working class fighter who was jailed by the fascist regime, aid for Andre Aleka, the black editor of a working class newspaper in Saint Lucia, who was framed, won his case, but was then murdered by Government thugs, tied to a galvanised sheet upon which stones were placed, then thrown into the sea.

The NWA was put into contact with George Padmore, a Trinidadian revolutionary of well renown and others in England through Peter Blackman who was organising West Indian workers there. The NEW contributed articles on the local situation to Padmore's paper edited by C.L.R. James and which was world wide in circulation. The NEW also came into contact with Mrs. Pankhurst, an English woman, one of the founders of the Women's Liberation Movement, and who also published the *Ethiopian Times*.

There are defects in Rennie's *History*; it would be a miracle if there were not, particularly as it is one of the first attempts to reconstruct the history of the Caribbean working class from the inside of its struggle, and was written, moreover, by someone who is himself deeply involved in the present outburst of working class militancy in Trinidad. A few of them should be mentioned:

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1. In his enthusiasm to restore the memory of the high organised NWA, and in his anxiety to place the charismatic and undisciplined Butler in his proper historical perspective, Rennie sometimes leans dangerously towards exaggeration and almost falsification of the facts, as for example in his dismissal of Butler's role in the 1937 upheaval with the charge that Butler was the leader 'purely in the minds of the people'. Revolutionary history should be a record of the *real* experience of the class and not an extension of sectarian disputes within the revolutionary movement. This kind of deliberate exaggeration is unnecessary and can even be harmful.

2. The interconnection between the Trinidad struggles and the development of the Caribbean working class as a whole are also underplayed and even neglected. For an event as widespread as the 1937-8 riots, it is a major mistake to treat the riots in any of the islands as if they were totally independent of what was happening in the other islands.

3. There is very little treatment of the relations between the African and Indian sections of the working class during the period covered. Rennie makes the traditional African mistake of 'taking the Indian for granted' which is coming increasingly under attack within radical circles in the region. The relationship between the immigrant Indian worker and the 'native' African worker constitutes an important and integral part of the history of labour in Trinidad and Guyana. Colonial capitalism thrives upon these divisions within the class and this cannot be wished away by subsuming both sections of the class under some abstract objective notion of 'working class unity', or by pointing only to those instances where they have united in a common struggle against the state or management. The real divisions and tension between these two sections of the working class and their constant attempts to find ways of solving them constitute an important and central part of the dialectic of Trinidad labour history.

Franklin Smith

This pamphlet is available for £1.30 from *Race Today*, 74 Shakespeare Rd., London SE24.

**Commission on Industrial Relations
Report No. 76
Mansfield Hosiery Mills Ltd.
HMSO 55p**

The strike of Asian workers at the Loughborough premises of Mansfield Hosiery Mills lasted with greater or lesser degrees of intensity from October 1972 until January 1973. It was a historic struggle in that a section of the black working class who for years had been super-exploited came to the end of the line and started to fight back for the first time. They fought despite the hostility of white work mates and the open racism at times displayed by their union, the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers. Their stand opened the floodgate of the Asian industrial struggle and provided an example to be followed in cities up and down the country.

Characteristic of the struggle was the intervention of the state, whether in the form of the community relations officer who briefly persuaded them to go back to work, the police who maintained 'law and order' on the picket lines, or the Commission on Industrial Relations, part of the little lamented apparatus of the Industrial Relations Act. One of the legacies left by the CIR was a series of reports on struggles which take as their main theoretical task the upgrading of industrial relations from the cruder versions of exploitation still practiced in many regions of the United Kingdom to the far more sophisticated approach to control of the industrial struggle that the 1980s demand.

Thus the report on Mansfield Hosiery runs briefly through the facts of the '72 dispute and gives us useful background on the textile industry in general. It goes on to point out that the old-style approach of informality which characterised the NUHKW in the past is no longer good enough for these days when the shape and colour of the work force has changed as much as the shape of modern capital. Instead it wants a modern union, capable of assisting in a more positive way in the exploitation of its members through the

establishment of joint works committees, to defuse struggle through the establishment of a more clearly defined branch system, to negate Asian particularity in struggle by cooption and absorption. In a similar way, it recommends the company use its labour more efficiently, thus eliminating unnecessary and expensive wastage, that it introduces language courses, more particular approaches to the problems of women and immigrant workers, more positive assistance to enable the union to gain control of the workers and stifle any attempt at creative or indeed autonomous struggle.

The fear of black workers organising themselves is the underlying theme — 'Failure [to involve them in the policy making bodies of the union] could result in the alienation of immigrant members to such an extent that they might feel the need to enlist the support of alternative organisations or to break away completely to form a trade union exclusively for immigrant workers. Such a course of events would be an unfortunate development not only for the particular trade union, but for the trade union movement as a whole.' It's a well founded fear, for in challenging not just capital, but the union organisation itself and its role in the organisation of the work-force, the black workers' struggle may well carry implications for the survival of capital itself that even a building full of sociologists and industrial behaviourists like the CIR will not be able to deal with. If there is any doubting the point, the current situation at Imperial Typewriters underlines the truth of it. The black workers' struggle carries within it seeds of a basic challenge, not to workers' organisation, for it is part of that broader movement, but to the role of the trade unions in delivering that struggle safe to the door of capital. The state has cottoned on to that fact very rapidly and built a cocoon of smothering organisations to damp out the fire. The CIR Report is an important document on the means by which they intend to continue.

Larry O'Brien

'We helped the Asians far more than we helped our own people. This is what stuck in my craw all the time we were trying to get a settlement.'

—Peter Prendergast
Union of Hosiery & Knitwear Workers
1973
Speaking about Mansfield Hosiery Mills

LETTERS(cont.)

from p. 266

'Petty' Politics

Sir,

For some time now, my colleagues and I have been disillusioned with the Community Relations Commission, and some of the local Councils for Community Relations.

From personal experience we have found that quite a number of the officials seem to be much more concerned with the preservation of 'material gains' and 'petty power' accruing from their positions. This 'concern' with personal privileges, often manifests in a way that is detrimental to the interests of the minority ethnic groups that these officials are supposed to represent.

These absurd people do not seem to realise that their 'petty power' is not really power in any meaningful sense. These Black officials are mere 'messenger boys' and the 'agents' of the natives of this country, who hold the whiphand as they occupy the higher echelons of power in the CRC and the CCR's. Illustrative of this is the recent disturbing occurrence at Islington Council for Community Relations.

Four workers, three men and one young woman, all of them dedicated people, were the victims of slander and a conspiracy carried out by their fellow workers. Obviously unnerved by the zealous and dedicated nature of these four people, the other workers compiled a secret memorandum attacking the competence, qualifications, temperament, intentions, and salary of these four individuals. The aim was to destroy these four workers and so gain more benefit for themselves. These jealous workers were prepared to go to any lengths to achieve this goal.

Here is a quotation from the memorandum:

Should our major demands in the text of this memorandum not be met, we will then be forced to seek the support of the members of the Executive sympathetic to us. Alternately, we will be forced to withdraw our services en masse from the ICCR until such a time as our demands are satisfactorily met.

The Executive Committee, before whom these reactionary workers are prostrating themselves, is dominated by the natives of this country. The Committee has extensive power over ICCR. What is more, wonders of wonders, it has the Chief Inspector of Islington police station as one of its most influential members. Mr. Editor, you know only too well the 'wonderful interest' the police take in the welfare of the migrant community.

However, a demand was made by the

four workers for a retraction of the vicious remarks made in the memorandum. This only resulted in the suspension of one of the four workers. The fate of the other three hang in the balance.

Mr. Editor, by publishing this long letter you will help to thwart the complete victory of these reactionary workers and their English allies.

Vernon Harris, student teacher/youth and community worker.

Ian Philips, student teacher/youth and community worker.

Orin Blackman, detached youth worker WCCR.

Plea for Sugar

Sir,

I really don't think it is quite kind. I have always stuck up for you.

I have written to my MP, to the House of Commons, to the Prime Minister, to the Commonwealth Secretary, saying we must buy Commonwealth sugar, not Common Market beet. And now I cannot even have a spoonful of sugar to put in my tea.

You must be paid anything you like, but please can I have some sugar?

Miss Kel Wright.
26 Palm Grove

Stoke Hill
Guildford, Surrey.

Leicester Anti-Fascist Demonstration

Sir,

The Imperial Typewriter Strike Committee would like to take advantage of your columns to make clear its attitude towards the counter-demo against the National Front held on August 24. The NF demo arose directly out of the Imperial Typewriter situation to support 'Britons first'.

We were invited by the organisers, Inter-Racial Solidarity Campaign, to participate in the initial organising meeting. We refused, one of the reasons being, that the IRSC had done nothing to support us during the course of our strike.

We must protest at the way in which the left-wing organisations (most of which had ignored the struggle) that made up the counter demo completely ignored the Imperial Typewriter aspect of the demo and used it for their own sectional purposes. For some organisations like the IS it turned out to be a recruiting campaign to get Asians to join their organisation — in typical colonial style — with sub-committees, etc. The road of liberation for Hacks is to join sub-committees in white left wing organisations. If this is not paternalism, we don't know what is.

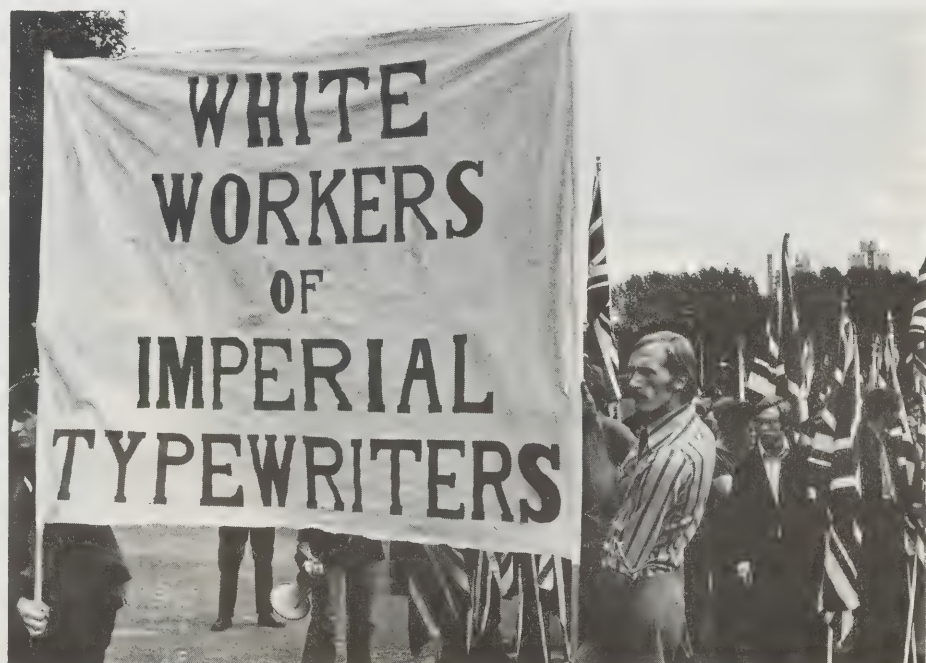
We feel that one of the main slogans of the demo should have been unconditional support for Black workers in their struggle for democratic rights — as at Imperial Typewriters. Instead, it concentrated on smashing the fascism of the NF. Our quarrel is not with this but that our dispute — which was the crux of the whole issue — was deliberately ignored. None of the speeches (with the exception of Bennie Bunsee) concerned itself with the Imperial Typewriter dispute and its significance in the struggle against the racist ideas of the NF. One got the impression that the white left

wing organisations of all hues were more concerned about a fascist threat about to engulf British society than actual support for Black workers struggle.

It is nice to go marching against abstract questions in the struggle against racism but it is even more important to relate it to concrete issues.

The Imperial Typewriters strikers themselves are now going to move that NF members should be expelled from their union branch.

H. Khetani
for the Imperial Typewriter Strike Committee.



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IRELAND
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PUBLIC MEETING in Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton. Wednesday, 18 September at 8 pm. Speakers: a black militant, an ex-soldier and a member of the Troops Out Movement.
Organised by Troops Out Movement

CHILE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN
SOUTH LONDON

15 September
1 pm.
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16 September 7.30 pm
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Inner Areas Study: Liverpool
COMMUNITY-BASED
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Do you know what it's like to live in Liverpool 8?

A WORKER IS REQUIRED IMMEDIATELY to co-ordinate & develop a community-based further education project, mainly with young adults at present outside organised groups, exploring & trying to solve the particular practical problems of living in this area. Among these are unemployment, overcrowding, police harassment, racial friction . . . Most young adults in the area reject existing education services & are unemployed or in dead-end jobs.

The co-ordinator must be able to work closely with local people, particularly Black people, have a flair for organising projects & be able to negotiate with professionals & officials in existing education services. He/she should

preferably have experience in similar work. Inner Areas Study was set up by the Department of the Environment & Liverpool Corporation, aiming to examine the problems of Liverpool's inner areas from the viewpoint of the people living there. This project is one of a number funded to do this.

So far, grants have been made to a number of community groups to run small FE projects. The project is now being run by a local management group set up by Liverpool Personnel, an independent employment agency working mainly with young Black people in Liverpool 8. Monitoring & research will be done by IAS.

There is a sizeable budget for the projects. Salary will be within the range £1,680 to £2,500 pa. Write with brief details, for more information & application form to: FE Project, Liverpool Personnel, 2 Rialto Buildings, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool L8 1TB.

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Ref.C.4 Lambeth Social Services
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WHICH WAY
BLACK AMERICA?

THE NEW YORK TIMES
THE NEW YORK TIMES
THE NEW YORK TIMES

LETTERS

Indian Political Prisoners

Sir,

I have read some issues of your magazine with great interest and would like to contribute by informing your readers about the treatment of political prisoners here in India. At present there are about 35,000 political prisoners held in the jails of this country. A majority of them are being held without trial — some on specific, if fabricated, criminal charges but mostly under the Defence of India Rules (DIR) and the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). These are preventive detention laws the objectives of which (as stated by the Supreme Court recently) are not to punish people for what they have done but to prevent them from doing it. In short, these laws give the State power to round up anyone it chooses. Many thousands of young people have been arrested in this way and held without trial for anything from two to five years. Most of them are described as being members or sympathisers of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) — commonly known as the Naxalites. Their ideology advocates armed struggle to bring about social and political change in India and their name originates from the Maoist oriented peasant uprising which took place in Naxalbari (West Bengal) in 1967. As a result the number of political prisoners in West Bengal is higher than in any other Indian state. Official estimates range from 15,000 to 20,000 some facts regarding the condition of Indian persons and the torture of prisoners inside them have recently been published by Amnesty International who spoke with several ex-prisoners. One from Hazaribagh jail said that 51 alleged Naxalites are being kept in chains 24 hours a day. The chains consist of an iron ring on each ankle, each of which is attached to an iron bar some 20 inches long and the bars are then connected to another one around the waist. One of these prisoners, Ashim Chatterjee, who recently went on a hunger strike, was chained like this for two years and kept in solitary confinement. Another, Shibal Roy, who contracted tuberculosis was allowed out briefly to hospital for treatment but put back into irons as soon as he was returned to prison.

In Calcutta's notorious Presidency Jail, the same report says medical and sanitation facilities are so bad that various skin diseases (particularly scabies) are wide-spread. Prisoners are not allowed to be treated at outside hospitals because the authorities consider that to be a security risk. Special applications, made on behalf of critically ill prisoners by their relatives, are seldom if ever considered. Ramal Roy Chowdhury, arrested in October 1970, died in April 1972 — it is said the day his 'Special

Release' was granted.

There have been several allegations of torture which include severe beatings — to the extent of broken limbs — prisoners being hung upside-down and pins and nails being inserted into their nails and into the other sensitive organs of the body. Modern electric shock methods are used and prisoners say some have been totally disfigured by burns from cigarette butts. All this is done to extract information and force 'confessions'.

In a recent report published by the *Illustrated Weekly of India* (similar in status to the *Sunday Times Magazine*), the writer interviewed some women, members of the All India Womens Association, who were arrested on May 3 in connection with an anti price rise demonstration. These women were sent to the Presidency Jail and were put in a cell close to three other women — Naxalite prisoners. They described what they saw and heard. 'One month after their detention these girls were taken to Tal Bazaar (headquarters of the Calcutta police) There they were taken to an underground cell for interrogation.' Apparently their answers failed to satisfy the police. 'The girls were then stripped naked and made to lie on a table. They would begin by burning them with cigarettes — from the neck, to the breasts to the stomach and so on. After this, one of the girls who refused to speak had an iron ruler inserted into her rectum. As a result of repeated torture her rectum and vagina have been joined. After this the emaciated bodies of the girls were brought back to the jail by police van. After about 20 days, when they recovered, the girls were taken back to Tal Bazaar and subjected to the same torture'

And Mrs. Gandhi calls this 'the Indian road to Socialism'.

Sunita Sen
London

P.S. I recommend that you read or publish the report published by Amnesty International. It is available in London from the Publications Dept. of Amnesty International, 53 Theobalds Road, London WC1.

Lump Workers

Sir,

I have been following the articles and letters on the question of agency nurses and find the point of view you take quite stimulating and realistic.

I have been struck by a strong resemblance in approach to that given in a recent Solidarity pamphlet on the Lump system of employment in the building trade.

In both nursing and building there has been a move to 'non-organised' working arrangements due partly to the marginal increase in freedom gained through this and partly because in both cases the

union has been no good.

Enclosed is a copy for you to see what I mean perhaps it might be worth a review.

Bob Dent

*This pamphlet is available from:
c/o 4 The Grove,
Lancaster. Price 15p*

Brixton Squatters

Sir,

Am I alone in detecting a note of uncertainty — even of mild hysteria — creeping into some of your coverage of current issues? Your piece on the Evandale Road squat in last month's edition, for instance, is a classic example of double-think.

On the one hand, you appear to be saying that Lambeth Council is justified in taking a tough line with squatters who move into new homes at the expense of waiting list families; on the other, that council should be more sympathetic to their needs.

What the writer of this poorly-researched article has overlooked is that, inevitably, many of the families waiting to be rehoused are black. Most of the houses that the West Indian and Asian immigrants of 20 years ago were forced to live in are now officially classified as slums, so the occupants have automatically risen to the top of the waiting list.

This is not primarily a race issue, since the 'legal' tenants in Evandale Road are both black and white. It is a question of simple priorities. But I think you should be careful, when stating the case for squatters, not to lay yourselves open to the charge of discriminating against black waiting-list families — most of whom have endured dreadful housing conditions for years.

It is socially irresponsible, and possibly dangerous, to play off one section of the community against another and I do not think people in Lambeth — whether black or white — will thank you for it. In this corner of London we are trying to build a multi-racial society and articles like this are no help. I write as an executive member of the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth.

Peter Strick
75 Brailsford Road
Brixton, London SW2.

EDITORIAL

Which Way Black America?

In this issue we reprint from the American journal, *The African World*, an edited version of the intense ideological struggle presently sweeping through the black movement in the U.S.A.

At a major national conference in the spring of this year, leading figures advanced their ideological positions which in the main represent the varied tendencies inside the movement. It is a struggle that is crucial for the international revolutionary movement for two reasons: Firstly the black American movement has had a profound impact in stimulating and enriching by ideas and action the rebellions of black people everywhere — from the Aborigines in Australia to the Dalit Panthers in India. This process is by no means complete, nor is it confined solely to blacks. The following passage, from 'Sex, Race & Working Class Power', written by a Marxist Feminist Selma James (*Race Today*, January 1974), bears us out:

Those of us in the feminist movement who have torn the final veil away from this international capitalist division of labour to expose women's and children's class position, which was hidden by the particularity of their caste position, learnt a good deal of this from the Black movement [in the U.S.A.]. It is not that it is written down anywhere A mass movement teaches less by words than by the power it exercises which, clearing away the debris of experiences, tells it like it is.

And secondly, located in the heart of the imperialist giant, the black movement in the U.S.A. is strategically placed to deal the most mortal of blows against imperialism. Here in Britain there is an important similarity with the situation of black people in the U.S.A. — the fact that we are a minority within the total working class, a minority distinguishable by race. It is a different situation say from that which prevails in the Caribbean where capital is overwhelmingly white and the working class exclusively black. That the race question is the class question in the Caribbean is plain for all to see. That the same holds true in Britain and the U.S.A. is much more difficult to discern.

Underlying all the political statements of the black Americans in this issue is a preoccupation with this very question. At once we need to identify an overwhelming disagreement with a general assumption that pervades each political position that the white section of the American working class is standing still. This is to underscore one of the major achievements of the black movement, the fact that it has and can push the white working class movement into action. Only one example need be given here. It is a fact that a contributory factor to the defeat of American imperialism in the war against the Vietnamese was the rebellion of the rank and file soldier in the American army. Sons of proletarians, they were. And it is equally true that the Black movement represented in the jungles of Vietnam by the black soldier stimulated the white soldier to rebellion,

thereby undermining his traditional fanatical allegiance to the American flag. No doubt there are many examples of this process in motion throughout the U.S.A. Perhaps it is this very process which has driven some intellectuals to re-think the positions they were advancing only a few years ago. Of course this is not to say that in pointing to this process, we have identified the dominant tendency in American working class politics. If this were so, then the revolution would have been won a long time ago. What we do seek to negate is what has so far passed in some quarters for *total* social reality, that 'the white working class is oppressed but they are not aware of their oppression' as Carmichael says.

Having unburdened ourselves of that millstone we can now more freely attempt to confront the race/class question. What both the black movements in Britain and America have had to destroy (and we have done that quite successfully) is the narrow definition of class as advanced by the male white left. If the struggle did not take place in the factory it was not the class struggle. So that the struggles which emanated from the deep South, the riots in the major cities, the massive organisation of the black reserve army of labour in the Black Panther Party, were not in fact working class struggles but some peculiar social phenomenon which somehow did not meet the required qualifications to merit acceptance within the American working class. We therefore agree with Baraka when he says that 'to say as some multi-national formations do, that they represent the entire working class, is not to go to the depths of an analysis and investigations of American society'.

The black movement in the United States therefore has by its overwhelming rebellion, redefined class not simply to include millions of blacks but to make the black working class fundamental to any revolutionary strategy. The hierarchy of labour within the whole of the American and British working classes spans from the white male at the very top to the black female child at the very bottom with its separate interests, each with a specific and particular relationship to capital. It is this specificity that defines the total social and cultural life of each section. And it is this experience within the hierarchy of labour that has shaped what is now described as a black nation within American and British societies. What presents itself as a racial conflict is in essence a conflict between different levels of the hierarchy and it is through the unceasing conflict between the different sections that capital has established its domination and continues to dominate us all.

This is not a call to end the conflict by proclamation. For in the same way that capital dominates us through the varied contradictions within the class, so too it creates the dynamism nurtured within the heart of the conflict to shatter these divisions and break the rule of capital once and for all. The black movement in the U.S.A. has led the way to this end.

This issue was edited by Leila Hassan

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Gian Singh Rayat and Kewal Singh Rehal, both of whom live in the Chapeltown area of Leeds, have worked on the Leeds buses for 8 and 13 years respectively. When they came to England they shaved their beards and cut their hair in order to get jobs. 18 months ago they wrote to the Leeds Passenger Transport Authority saying they wanted to be re-baptised into the Sikh faith, and asked permission to wear turbans on the buses. The negotiations dragged on, and Rayat and Rehal asked for help from the union. The union said they could not wear their turbans on the buses.

The issue came to a head on 3 July, when Rayat and Rehal, having been re-baptised, turned up for work in their turbans. They were immediately sent home. Mr. Stone, the District Manager, was quoted as saying that the men had broken uniform regulations and therefore could not be allowed to work. Stone revealed his true position, that 'immigrants' are automatically a problem, in a letter to one of the people pressing the Sikhs' case:

We have had no problems of any kind despite the fact that people from many lands have worked for us over a considerable number of years. That this position has existed is I think a tribute not only to the members of our staff but also to sensible management policy.

Meanwhile, the race relations establishment was rumbling into gear. Dr. I. Peter Fletcher, the Senior Community Relations Officer, had a meeting with members of the Sikh Temple Committee and the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority. They came up with the ham-fisted solution that men could wear their turbans — so long as they stayed inside the garage greasing axles. 'It was a long and useful discussion', said Dr. Fletcher. Rayat and Rehal did not think so, and rejected the offer.

Solicitors for the Sikh Temple Committee wrote pointing out that Sikh bus drivers in Bradford and Huddersfield, part of the same Transport Authority as Leeds, could wear turbans, so it was inconsistent of management to bar turbans on Leeds buses. Finally, after a letter from Lord Wade, Chairman of the Yorkshire Council for Community Relations, management backed down.

At mid-day on 26 July the Sikhs were told they could work in the buses in their turbans. Three hours later they were told that the union objected to management's decision, and they were put on paid leave. Asked why the union objected, Jim Russell, chairman of the Branch committee, said 'the management decided without consulting us'. Management were conveniently off the hook, and now the union took the full force of the opposition. The opposition came in various forms.

TURBANS, SPEARS & TOILETS



Dr. Fletcher was counselling moderation at the CRC meetings, writing letters to Jack Jones and Len Murray, and setting up meetings to explain the significance of the Sikh turban to the union executive. The Sikh Temple Committee was leaving things in Dr. Fletcher's hands.

But it was becoming apparent that these behind-the-scenes negotiations were getting nowhere. Dr. Roger Ballard, a research worker, warned the local paper that the union's intransigence might result in black trade unions being formed. David Allison, the union Branch Secretary, responded that there was no racism in his union. To prove this, he quoted the view of the branch committee's West Indian vice-chairman, Joe Walcott, that Rayat and Rehal's action was setting back his 12 years of work for integration in the union. Chapeltown's United Caribbean Association came back with a resounding statement:

We the black people of Leeds support the rights of the Sikhs to wear their turbans in any situation they may experience. The Sikh's turban is part of him and denying him the right to wear it is like saying that West Indians cannot work unless they straighten their hair. We further deprecate the action of the T&GWU using a black man to further its racist aims.

The Sikh Temple Committee was at last persuaded by Dr. Ballard, GS Bhogal, chairman of the Indian Workers Association (GB) and some of the younger Asians to organise a demonstration. On 18 September, 100 men and women Sikhs and supporters from the Church and the socialist movement assembled outside the T&G headquarters. A delegation went inside and came out with no change. The union's statement that it would ballot its members was met with outrage: the turban is a religious issue, said the Sikhs, and the union has no right to legislate on religious matters where no disruption of the service is caused.

The Leeds Trades Council was approached, and a resolution condemning the T&G busmen's branch was passed. Support for the Sikhs came from busmen in Bradford, Blackburn, Huddersfield and Burnley.

The proposal to hold a ballot was found to be unconstitutional, and a mass meeting of the 9/12 branch was held instead on Sunday, 29 September. 900 busmen crowded into the Town Hall to hear Allison, the Branch Secretary, announce that management had offered to iron out some pay anomalies if the union would accept the Sikhs in their turbans. Many busmen regarded this as an ineffective attempt at blackmail,

since changes would be made to the pay structure whatever happened. T&GWU District Secretary Hayhurst was continually interrupted and heckled as he tried to explain that union policy was against discrimination, and that the opposition to turbans was condemned on all sides and would result in the isolation of the union branch. He told the meeting that the situation at Imperial Typewriters had been mishandled, and the turban issue was getting the union an even worse name. His advice was completely ignored. Speakers from the floor said that if Sikhs were allowed to wear turbans, West Indians would want to bring their spears to work, and the next thing they'd ask for is separate toilets. The meeting voted overwhelmingly against allowing the Sikhs to wear turbans.

The Sikh Temple committee is now in complete disarray. The leadership is resisting calls for a massive national Sikh demonstration. Dr. Fletcher refused to discuss his role. 'I'm just a sort of intermediary', he said. The union officials gave embarrassed, evasive statements to the press. The only hope now is for pressure from the black workers everywhere to force the Leeds busmen to change their position.

Race Today (Leeds)

LONDON WEIGHTING FIGHT

In reply to an £8 a week London Weighting claim at United Glass Containers, New Cross, London S.E.14, we were informed that the firm had no spare cash (pull the other leg); also, 'there will be no London Weighting so you can do what you like'.

We T&GWU process workers (90 per cent immigrant labour) started our overtime ban on 9 August causing 25 per cent loss of production daily. Management did not believe that over 200 of us could stick together for any length of time.

We work six days on and two days off, doing eight hours overtime on top of our own shift to cover for labour shortages when necessary.

While the firm wanted us to sweat it out, their customers' orders were being affected. After five weeks Management offered us £1 a week now and £1 a week which they would bank for us till the end of November. Then, it would be paid as a lump sum provided we accepted a series of productivity deals that might produce more money. We turned this down and decided to step up action by withdrawing co-operation in the use of certain packaging materials from Monday, 23 September.

But on Friday, the 20th, the crown of one furnace caved in which meant a major rebuilding job for the firm, a lot of spare labour on the shop floor and us in a weak position if we started trouble.

After having given our word we could not turn back so on Monday, the 23rd, instead of starting work we had meetings with our mates and then with the firm before going home.

We had just made history! Every bottle producing machine had stopped for the first time

due to industrial action at New Cross.

Each shift would come to work, have a meeting, take a vote and go home — about 200 angry men. After some running around, Management and the Union's national negotiators decided to meet on Friday, the 27th, to discuss the problem. So in order to get these talks underway, at a mass meeting on Thursday, the 26th, we decided on official return to work on Sunday, the 29th.

We had made our point — without labour, machines will not turn. There was no sense in us making further sacrifices. We also thought that those with a financial strain might start slipping in by the back door. We have also shown that multiracial workforce (mainly Asians) can be united over a common problem — more money.

Don't be put off by the gloomy forecasts of a freeze, high unemployment and factory closures being propounded by employers, trade union officials and budding politicians. Organise and fight or you will get nothing. If a firm is going to shut down, a worker's permission or consent is never asked for. Grab whatever possible while you can.

Trade unions were formed to acquire a better deal for the workers. Our fathers fought before us. The more we achieve in our struggles now, the easier it will be for our kids.

By the way, a Personnel Manager's job is going at United Glass Containers, New Cross. Ring 01-639 0175 if you are interested. By the time you receive your *Race Today*, we expect a few more job opportunities to be advertised on our Notice Board.

United Glass Workers

On Monday, 23 September, some forty National Union of Teachers' members were drinking in the 'Railway Tavern' (Grove Rd., Mile End, E.2.) after a meeting. Some were informed that the landlord, Gerald Dominick Byrne, was not serving blacks. We immediately challenged him on his attitude towards black people, and he turned suddenly defensive, saying, 'it is none of your fucking business'. We protested that it certainly was, as the issue concerned the parents of our own children, and we pressed him to answer, did he or did he not serve black people in the pub? Within the ear-shot of several of us he said, 'no, I don't serve them here', and went on to say, 'they are all pimps, queers and prostitutes'.

On hearing these remarks, all the N.U.T. teachers walked out, and went to another pub further up Grove Road. In there we found several black ex-regulators of the 'Railway Tavern' who were now excluded from the pub, which

NO TAVERN TIME FOR BLACKS

under the old management had been their local. They agreed to join with the teachers on an immediate picket of the pub, and we went back to the 'Railway Tavern'. There they were again refused service, as were the teachers, and the landlord immediately called the police, who or-

continued over



Pickets outside the offices of Islington Committee for Community Relations. They were protesting the unfair dismissal of West Indian worker Pat Bell. They demanded a public and independent investigation into the affairs and internal practices of the ICCR.



dered all of us to leave the pub, barging and pushing at us. One policeman was heard to say to the landlord, 'do you want us to nick them?' A teacher was arrested for 'threatening behaviour' while he was standing innocuously in the pub doorway, and taken off to Bow Road Police Station.

Local residents confirmed that the 'Railway Tavern' has been operating a colour bar ever since Byrne (formerly of the Crooked Billet Walthamstow) took over the pub. At a further picket outside the pub on the evening of Friday, 27 September, some sixty strong, supported by members of the National Association of Stevedores and Dockers and the Transport and General Workers' Union, school students as well as the teachers and local residents, Alfred Quest, aged 64, a Jamaican hospital worker and National Union of Public Employees' member who lives in Grove Road, said that generally blacks are not served, and sometimes served only after a long wait with off sales in bottles

over the bar and not allowed to drink on the premises. He had been told by Byrne, 'I don't serve black people', when he had asked for a drink.

Byrne has been taken to the Race Relations Board by one customer and the East London Teachers' Association of the N.U.T., which has a clear anti-racist policy, is moving to contest his licence with Charrington's. British law protects the landlord, allowing him to refuse service to any person whom he chooses, *without giving him a reason*. This is clearly a law which protects any racist landlord, and a law that the police are assiduous to see obeyed.

The incident has happened at a time when the Bethnal Green and Bow area has seen adopted its first National Front candidate, not surprisingly an ex-policeman, Walter Castleton from Wood Green. He has clearly got at least one congenial pub in which to drink in the constituency, and some of the local black residents have already named others.

Chris Searle
(N.U.T., East London Association)

Freedom To Brutalise

The case of Rodwell Gentles was reported in the August issue of *Race Today* under the title of 'Leeds School Incident'. This involved an incident which occurred on the 15th, June 1974 which resulted in Rodwell Gentles receiving 16 stitches above his right eye.

Rodwell is a pupil at Earl Cowper Middle School where last summer, Black parents held a successful one day strike which resulted in the removal of the headmaster at that time. Mr. Buckle and caused much embarrassment to Leeds Education Dept. and City Council.

The parents were protesting about an accumulation of grievances which included bad school facilities, and mainly the insulting and racist behaviour of the headmaster and some teachers to both pupils and parents.

The new headmaster from January 1974 has been Mr. Brian Clark. His year at Earl Cowper has shown no improvement to the pre-strike situation.

Of course there have been 'changes'; like the police have been brought into the school to deal

with incidents which occur within the school. Meanwhile the insults to pupils and parents have continued.

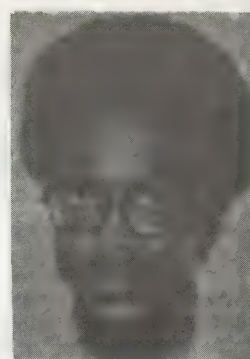
It is against this background that the mysterious circumstances surrounding the incident which caused Rodwell Gentles to receive 16 stitches above his eye, must be viewed.

Rodwell was seriously injured while in the care of the Earl Cowper Middle School staff. Even to this date no one from the school has given Rodwell's parents a report on the incident or enquired as to his condition. Mr. Gentles took it upon himself and visited Mr. Clarke, the headmaster, who gave him a very rude rebuff.

It was after this, that Mr. Gentles decided to take legal action. The Magistrates Advice Room refused him private summons because it was not against a neighbour. Mr. Gentles was told that he would have to get a solicitor. So far, he is yet to find a solicitor who will deal with the case.

Race Today (Leeds)

'IF ONLY HE WOULD BEND A LITTLE'



Protests over the refusal of Burnham's Government to allow Walter Rodney to take up a teaching post at the University of Guyana have come from all over the world (see *Race Today*, October 1974). More than one hundred leading intellectuals and international figures such as CLR James, Stokely Carmichael, Imamu Baraka, Chinua Achebe along with universities in the USA and Canada have formed 'The International Committee for Fairness to Dr. Walter Rodney'. They presented a petition to the Guyanese Ambassador in Washington demanding that the Burnham Government 'uphold the original decision of the University of Guyana to offer Dr. Rodney an appointment'.

In Guyana itself the campaign for Rodney has cut across racial divisions between Indian and African. Long standing political rivals have shared platforms denouncing Burnham's regime for not only moving to reduce the whole university into a 'party school' but for behaving contemptuously to the entire Guyanese and Caribbean people and to the Black world. The media in Guyana tried suppressing the facts. It was only recently that the Thompson-owned Guyana Graphic, reacting to an outcry against the suppression of news about Dr. Rodney, published a half-page advertisement as well as news items disclosing the extent of international solidarity for him.

In London on 13th September a meeting attended by over 300 Third World people, received addresses from Dr. Stuart Hall, Acting Director at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham University, Dr. Omawale, Dean of Faculty of Natural Science, University of Guyana, John LaRose, Publisher and Bookseller, Lal P. Singh, representative for the Peoples Progressive Party, Joe Abrams, teacher and law student, and Ndeh Ntumazah from the Cameroon, who identified the ban on Dr. Rodney's appointment as a significant move in the mounting series of undemocratic, imperialist-inspired actions by the Burnham Government. On the following Monday a number of concerned Guyanese

and West Indians, picketed the Guyana High Commission in London. There they handed in a petition from the meeting which condemned the Guyanese Government's interference in the appointment of Dr. Walter Rodney, demanded his immediate reinstatement and the end of the ongoing harassment and persecution of the Guyanese people by the Burnham Government. On 29th September a meeting was held in Manchester where a message from H. Othman, lecturer at the University of Dar-es-Salaam was read. He said: 'I must say that the news that he [Rodney] has been denied a job in his own country, a fact which has been reported in our local press, has really shocked many of us in Tanzania. We cannot understand how an underdeveloped country, lacking all the necessary resources, including committed educated manpower can do such a thing.' At a P.N.C. branch meeting in Manchester, three ministers of the Burnham Government, faced hostile questioning from their own supporters about the Guyanese Government's harassment of Rodney. They replied: 'If only he would bend a little...'

But it is clear that Rodney has no intention of bending. In an interview with a West Indian newspaper he had this to say: 'My own personal position is simple: I am here to stay. I have returned home to my country in which I have never participated in its national political life, but where I hear that I am a threat to national security. I shall not be intimidated. I shall not accept to be exiled. I cannot say now to what extent I may become involved. We have been told within the walls of universities, that academic studies cannot continue unless we exclude political dimensions, that ideology is a profanity, when introduced into an academic debate, when in fact, what these institutions do is to define the world in very ideological terms. But the ideology which they use is the ideology of the possessing class. So when they say that 'we cannot allow ideological flavour to our studies, it is another way of saying, 'we do not want the politics of the working class'.

NEWS BACKGROUNDS FLY WITH C.I.T.:

Anthony McQueen, a young worker from East Dry River, Port of Spain, booked with his life savings on a flight organised by Caribbean International Travel Ltd. to visit his sister in London. When he returned to the offices in Port of Spain to confirm his booking he was told that the flight was cancelled, they did not know about a refund and to crown it all, 'The Boss man in England so we can't do nutten until we hear from him'.

At first glance, the events that led to McQueen's predicament are simply explained. On 30 August the Civil Aviation Authority stepped in and announced that it was suspending the Air Tour Operator's licence granted to Caribbean International Travel Ltd. The CAA is the statutory body appointed by the British Government to supervise the charter flight business and in their announcement they stated that they were *'not satisfied that the company's financial arrangements were adequate for the discharge of its obligations under the terms of its licence'* (our italics). When the rumours started to circulate about CIT's viability, the CAA lost little time in running a preliminary investigation and calling a temporary halt.

In the first year of business, the company turned over half a million pounds, and when the accounts were filed in June of this year they showed a meagre profit of £200 despite the fact that their overheads were minimal. (They operated out of a director's home incurring little administrative expenses.) They mentioned nothing of the firm's activities through their Caribbean offices in Port of Spain, Kingston, Georgetown. In addition, they showed that the company had made loans to certain of the directors, a move that other directors did not approve. Most of CIT's passengers are West Indian workers who had saved part of their wages to make the journey. Following the closure, some were transferred to the regular flights run by British West Indian Airways, who have since terminated dealings with stranded passengers.

Others like McQueen whose bookings originated at the Caribbean end are unable to move while some drift back to Britain indebted to British High Commission offices in the Caribbean for their return passages.

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The inefficiency, the contempt for tried and tested administrative procedures, the get-rich-quick mentality of the cheap hustler which characterised the managing body of CIT, would provide ample material for comedy were it not for the fact that their victims are those who have saved portions of their sweat to make that journey 'back home'.

Some complain that CIT was ratted on by competing white businesses. That may be so but the essence of the matter is simply that the organisers gave their competitors the necessary ammunition to launch an attack. No one should be side-tracked, by the vulgar attempt to play the skin game, from placing the responsibility where it belongs — with the directors of the company.

Nor is it just a question of West Indian businessmen incapable through some cultural quirk of running a company efficiently. Were it so it would be a sad indictment on the West Indian community indeed. The emergence of this social grouping of businessmen is quite new.

They form part of an emerging West Indian middle class in Britain and bring to their business activities all the weaknesses of that class. From whence have they come? The vast majority of West Indians who came to Britain during the fifties and sixties came as workers, as a part of the international reserve of labour on the move. While the booming economy enabled white workers to exercise a certain choice and refuse to do certain work, changes in the methods and patterns of agriculture and industry in the Caribbean combined to throw onto the international labour market a vast new section of the working class.

Once in Britain, West Indians had first of all to face the hostility of white workers which manifested itself in the race riots of the '50s. All this, with little protection from traditional white working class organisations. Social facilities there were none and so the community organised itself in a variety of social and cultural organisations, ranging from the shebeen through the Credit Union to the cricket club — all of them working class to the core. They reproduced here in Britain the identical organisational forms which in the colonial era had sustained the Caribbean working class and laid the basis for a higher form of political organisation — the political party as an instrument with which to fight the colonial state. Here in Britain they provided the social bases for the West Indian Standing Conference and the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), the major organised political thrusts involving West Indians in the struggle against racism in Britain.

A major class need has always been the return home for a holiday. Low wages made the realisation of that need almost impossible for the overwhelming majority. It was through these organisations that it was possible to satisfy the regulations for booking charter flights to the West Indies. A section of men emerged who would specialise in acting as agents for the club in negotiating with the airline.

With very few exceptions, they were disciplined by a tightly knit organisation whose members kept an eagle eye on the movement of funds. The constitution demanded that books were kept and accounts provided for the inspection of the mem-

THE CHARTER FLIGHT HUSTLE

NEWS BACKGROUND

bership. Here within these organisations there developed a body of men who had acquired through the carrying out of the organisations commercial transactions, a considerable expertise in their dealings with the business world. Their appetites were whetted with the possibility of making it for themselves. More than that, they moved to undercut the very organisations that created them.

No longer were they satisfied with executive office in social clubs, directorships were their goal. Companies flourished, one-time Treasurers now became company directors, each with his accountant, nourishing dreams of the big time. They could not compete with established capitalist firms — they simply did not have the capital — nor were they by birth or social status connected to those who had. What they did have were vast social connections within the West Indian working class. They exploited these connections ruthlessly by maintaining the organisational forms to comply with charter regulations. (In order to charter a plane you had to belong to some social club or affinity group.)

The current chairman of CIT, Egbert Purcell, set up his own company, Fairdeal Travel and Insurance, as long ago as 1958. Purcell's base as a travel agent was the United Caribbean Athletic and Cricket Social Club which operated in the New Cross area of South London. Frank Broome, the current managing director of CIT, also has his own firm called Rainbow Travel. Rainbow was set up in 1960 by a West Indian travel agent called Thomas Hawkins. Hawkins sold out in 1961 to a group that included Dr. David Pitt, Labour Party and CARD activist and now chairman of the GLC. Pitt owned the firm along with a Jamaican couple, the Stephensons, and sold his share in the mid-sixties, resigning as a director. In 1971, the Stephensons returned to Jamaica on the strength of their ten years in the travel business and sold the firm to Frank Broome. Broome emerged from the Caribbean and Continental Association,

which had given him considerable contacts and expertise in travel.

Everton Forbes was another member of the board. Forbes had been active in the West Indian Overseas National Organisation, specialising in travel to Trinidad and Jamaica with West Indians from the Haringey area of London. In January 1973, after the formation of CIT, Forbes had changed the name of his own recently-formed company, Trinidad and Montego Bay Holiday Travel to Everton Forbes (WIONO) Limited and used the agency to channel business in CIT's direction. Forbes handled the advertising for CIT.

Now partially severed from West Indian working class organisations, they set up at the end of the sixties the Caribbean International Organisation to coordinate the activities of some of the travel agents. Then at the beginning of the seventies, the I.A.T.A. announced an agreement on a new form of regulations, the Advanced Booking Charter. This meant that where before the regulations allowed, as the only means, of selling an entire plane load of seats to a social club or some other affinity group, new regulations meant that airlines were able to sell off just a block of seats on advance booking to a charter agent who would sell them to his own customers. It was the final break with the class organisation. They could now be full blown businessmen in their own right. In response to the new A.B.C. charters, the nucleus of businessmen decided to set themselves up as a proper business and apply for an Air Tour Operators Licence (ATOL).

An ATOL would allow them to buy a block of seats from an airline, advertise widely and sell seats in advance considerably cheaper than the normal flights. To get it they would have to show experience, goodwill and financial backing by lodging a bond with a recognised bank that could be drawn on by the CAA if anything went wrong and passengers got stranded.

Out of Caribbean International Organisation, based firmly if distantly in West Indian self organisation of the fifties, came Caribbean International Travel. As

the first black business to be granted a licence in Britain, it would channel passengers not just on to British Airways, but also onto Air Jamaica and BWIA, the national airlines owned or administered by CIT's emerging class counterparts in the Caribbean. Other travel agents who weren't in on the deal nevertheless agreed to push business CIT's way. Despite the misgivings of some of them, a black-owned A.B.C. licence-holder was something they would support.

The company was set up in November 1972 by eight directors who put in a nominal capital of £20,000. It had its offices in the original chairman's house in Beckenham, Kent. It was always intended to move into premises in central London at a later date. The company applied for, and was granted, an Air Tour Operator's Licence and lodged a bond for £50,000. It went into business with an impressive advertising campaign. 'There's no place like home,' said its adverts in *West Indian World*. 'Fly with CIT.'

In addition to their £2,500, each director brought with him a wealth of experience and contacts. Each was to look after one section of the market or the business. Thus the original managing director, Monty Fortune, had been operating a club called the Guyanese Cooperative and Social Club. Lloyd Campbell was a Brixton-based travel agent who had for years been handling the business side of the Jamaican Overseas Families and Friends Association. Broome and Forbes we have already mentioned.

Their class counterparts in the Caribbean hold the reins of political power. Shut out completely from positions of power in multinational companies, and with no capital themselves, they nationalise every dying company in sight, placing themselves as managing directors and other high sounding titles on management Boards. British West Indian Airways is one such company which has to be regularly supported by taxpayers' money. And together with other Boards of management of nationalised companies in Trinidad, they are described mockingly by the working class as party groups of the ruling party, the P.N.M. A reward for loyalty to the ruling party is a post in a nationalised industry.

The link had to be made. B.W.I.A. granted CIT the contract to fill 60 seats on every flight going to the Caribbean. This they could do with comparative ease and in the first year turned over £1½ million, declaring cheekily a profit of £200. Their licence was withdrawn and McQueen wonders about his life savings. Now cut from the discipline of the working class organisation and at the same time shut out from established business organisation, their half and half position makes them a nuisance to the black community. The fact that they are close to the working class socially coupled with the tendency to play the skin game — support black business — transforms a nuisance into a menace.

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OUTLAW AND DISORDER

'There is no doubt in my mind that the citadels of prejudice can be found best exemplified among the forces of law and order whose task is seen as keeping the blacks in order and in their place. From this prejudice, judges and magistrates are not exempt . . .'

'... That the summing up by Judge King-Hamilton Q.C. was a blatant and prejudiced distortion of the facts and a corrupt excursion into making up the minds of the Jury in a way that Quintin Hogg [Lord Chancellor] would be first to denounce in others but would never admit of his own judges.'

The above quotes represent overwhelmingly the sentiments of the black community in Britain, sentiments which have coalesced over the years into a broad political movement against police corruption, brutality and judicial bias.

Street battles have been fought, court proceedings halted by protesters, complaints lodged, protesters imprisoned as the confidence and power of the black community registered its impact against the forces of 'law and order' in British society. In the face of all this barristers defending black clients have consistently acted as a gag on the articulation of these sentiments in open court. Class allegiances dominated over client's interest.

The trial of the Mangrove 9 (nine defendants were charged with riot and affray following a demonstration against police brutality in Notting Hill) represented a significant breakthrough. Here three defendants chose to represent themselves and were able to pose a serious challenge to the judiciary by raising the issue of judicial bias in open court.

The power generated by the Mangrove 9 drove a wedge through what appeared to be an unassailable class loyalty. Ian MacDonald, a white barrister representing one of the defendants, accused the trial Judge, Edward Clarke, of attempting to exercise judicial tyranny over the defendants. He was reported to his Inn of Court - Middle Temple - and subsequently called before the Treasurer, Lord Justice Salmon who in turn issued a reprimand. Further defections were to come.

Rudy Narayan, West Indian barrister and journalist, called to the bar in 1968 - took up the issue. He launched a campaign in *West Indian World* and other journals, attacking judicial bias and police corrup-

tion. He took the battle into the courts and on one occasion was asked to leave the court, having offended the trial Judge. The quotes introducing the article are his.

The final confrontation came in the trial of Jamaican-born Donat Gomez. Gomez was charged with the murder of a prostitute and was defended by Narayan. The defence alleged that D.C. Supt. Terrence O'Connell had fabricated evidence against Gomez in respect of the murder charge, that O'Connell had conspired with members of the Staffordshire Constabulary to pervert the course of justice, that he, O'Connell, had committed perjury in his evidence.

It is common knowledge that when defence counsel takes up such a hard line against the prosecution, the judge instinctively moves to protect the police officers concerned. In this case Judge Ashworth was no exception. The transcript reveals that time and time again he, the judge, would interrupt Rudy Narayan in his cross-examination of prosecution witnesses. While the vast majority of white lawyers would mutter their discontent in corridors (and some black ones too), Narayan placed the issue before judge and jury: 'Can I just for a moment deviate completely from my intention of summing up to you in a non partisan way? I wish to say this to you now, members of the jury, on behalf of Gomez, that this learned judge has shown throughout this trial a clear intention to assist the prosecution at all times in this trial, and this is another example, a manifest example, of his intention to convict this man regardless of evidence.'

Gomez was found not guilty. The trial judge reported the 'offending remarks' to the Benchers at Lincolns Inn and Narayan was hauled before a committee to answer the charges of misconduct unbecoming of a barrister in that he:

A. 'Persistently attacked the trial judge in the case of R.V. Gomez

B. 'Persistently attacked the integrity of judges and magistrates in newspaper articles and a television interview.'

The committee led by one time advocate of fascism, Lord Justice Lawton, and including John Cobb Q.C., Michael Cakerey, Phillip Cox Q.C. and Quentin Edwards suspended Narayan for six months from practising as a barrister

in an attempt to halt the tendency among lawyers to defect from their preordained roles.

A constant stream of protests has been registered with the benchers at Lincolns Inn and coordinated through *Race Today*. Perhaps the last word should rest with those who have been besieged all their lives with propaganda on 'the impartiality of British justice'. A white working class housewife, who perchance attended the Gomez hearing, composed the following:

As we up in the gallery sit
We have listened a lot and learned quite a bit
The Judge is biased it's plain to see
He only agrees with the Q.C.

We all love our Defence learned friend
Who tries so hard Gomez to defend
But with the Judge he has to fight
To get folk to say what's wrong or right.

We get a laugh now and then
When Judge bellows 'Watchy my pen'
But Defence is right we've all agreed
It is the Judge who has gone to seed.

As I sit here and look around
There's little manhood to be found
Take for instance the Q.C.
To me he sounds a bit 'Girlie'

Then Judge himself a Batchelor still
I'll laugh out loud I'm sure I will
If when the word sex comes up
Judge looks as if it's something taken in a cup

He knows nothing of the facts of life
How can he? he's never had a wife
So take it which way you may
He can only quote from hearsay.

Then below the Judge (not very big)
Sits Clerk of Court in Gown and Wig
To me he looks like a wee mouse
Peeping from his little house.

Now to the right Defence I see
Those lovely lads one two three
Believe me Mr. Narayan
To me you are an 'Ideal Man'

We all cheer when up you stand
To fight O'Connell and his little band
A snake in the grass is what I regard
The man I see from Scotland Yard.

I've looked hard and long at Gomez too
And believe what he says is true
But Mrs. A and Mrs. B
Are both good liars that's plain to see

So at the end of this case
A neglected home I have to face
For I've come here every day
To here what you have to say

So now Defence I wish you luck
For throughout this trial you have shown such
pluck
And asked for truth and honesty
Surely Verdict can only be NOT GUILTY

WHICH WAY BLACK AMERICA?

Stokely Carmichael



After brief opening remarks, Stokely Carmichael, of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party, went to the heart of his analysis:

'It is Africa that is going to bury imperialism . . . not just because Africa is the home of the Black man, but because of the crucial position that it plays in world struggle. Once Africa's wealth and labor is channelled for the benefit of Africa, Africa will make a leap and bring the rest of the world along with it.'

He stated: 'We (All-African People's Revolutionary Party) are Nkrumahists, that's our ideology, our objective is Pan-Africanism. We define Pan-Africanism as the total liberation and unification of Africa under scientific socialism. We understand that when this objective is achieved, the Black man will be free all over the world and Africa will play a powerful force in world socialist revolution.'

He continued: 'The question before us is not a question of class struggle. Any serious revolutionary knows that class struggle is the motivating struggle, is the major struggle, that is not a question.'

Thus, having stated his position that class struggle is the 'motivating struggle,' Carmichael continued, 'the question before us now is what is the role of nationalism and what phase has the African revolution now entered. The only question before the Black community is the question of nationalism! I tell you that is the only question!'

He went on: 'Black people have been the vanguard of any serious anti-capitalist struggle in America. Anybody knows that. The Black man knows the evil system of capitalism better than any other man in the world. We know this vicious system seeks to take from the laborer the fruits of their labor. We must know that. What Africa has suffered, no other force on earth has suffered. It is those who are on the bottom who are the vanguard of a truly revolutionary force. There is no discussion, of course, the Black man is the vanguard . . . The only issue before us is the question of nationalism.'

Carmichael followed with the assessment that, 'anybody who knows revolu-

tion, knows that nationalism is a prerequisite to serious anti-imperialist struggle. It is not the final stage, of course not, but it is a prerequisite. Nationalism is the only question before us.'

'The problem with the Black man in America is that because of negative interpretation of his history, he is incapable of embracing African nationalism which is his only just nationalism.'

'We condemn imperialism because imperialism has snatched other people's lands. That's why we condemn it. That's the only reason we condemn it, because it has snatched their lands, it has taken their wealth, it has taken their labour for their benefit. When people struggle, they struggle to regain the land so they can use the wealth for the benefit of the people inside the land. Of course, we know if they don't go towards socialism, then contradictions will develop so our job is to push it toward socialism, but we must know what our proper nationalism is.'

'We know that socialism is the most just society, scientifically so, that is why we fight for it . . . when we talk about a national struggle in this country, the red man is the man we must speak to, justice demands that . . . Africa is the only home of the Black man!'

He continued: 'Unless a man has enough nationalism, he cannot talk about internationalism. No nationalism plus no nationalism gives you no nationalism. One nationalism plus one nationalism gives you internationalism.'

Of America, he had this to say: 'A backward interpretation of our history will make you think this land really belongs to us because we worked and sweated and worked and sweated. That is the most backward capitalist thinking one has ever found.'

Continuing, he said: 'That we are Africans is undeniable. No one can deny that. The question is whether our interests lie with Africa or lie with America.'

Concerning the destruction of imperialism, Carmichael said: 'Africa is supporting world imperialism proper now. If you liberate Africa, it helps bring down world imperialism much quicker and gives you a stronger base from which to attack imperialism.'

He stated his view of the fate of America. 'Nobody denies that socialism will come to America, of course it must come. Black workers will take the lead. But for real socialist transformation to come to America, the white working class is the crucial element. But it is necessary for the white people, for those brothers and sisters who adhere to that policy to be working in the white working class community trying to heighten the consciousness of the white working class. The white working class is oppressed, but they are not aware of their oppression.'

On the question of unity of Black and

Below we print an edited version of the different political tendencies as presented by leading figures in the Black movement in the U.S.A.

white workers, Carmichael had this to say: 'History has demonstrated to us the willingness of the Black man to work with his ally, the white working class. I don't know what assumption that some can now make that the Black man is no longer willing to struggle with his white ally. But for each willingness on the part of the Black man, I will demonstrate a betrayal on the part of the white working class.'

He continued: 'Although they have betrayed us, we are always willing to work with them.' He stated that as capitalist contradictions intensify capitalists will look for a scapegoat — the Black man — thus, he contended: 'Although the Black worker must be the vanguard, he must push the white worker out front. The Black worker must not move unless the white worker is moving.'

Carmichael returned to a point central to his call to liberate Africa first: 'Unless the Black man has a power behind him to speak on his behalf and to protect him, he will never be respected.'

He stated that neither the Black or white communities in the U.S. have organised mass, revolutionary forces, and added: 'Thus what is needed is building and developing the Black vanguard. While doing that, we must constantly try to raise the level of consciousness of the white working class. We must do that.'

'But', Carmichael intoned, 'our primary objective must be the building of Africa. Our primary objective must be the consolidation of socialism in Africa!'

He moved to a discussion of contradictions in the Black community noting that, 'we have Senators and Congressmen who call themselves Pan-Africanists and support Israel. They are able to support Israel because they have a misinformed nationalism.'

'We ask you to properly define nationalism and understand the proper phase of the African revolution. When we say the African Revolution, we mean Africans scattered all over the world, are to be involved in the same process at the same time.'

'The job of ideology is to channel the energies of the people toward the desired goal. If the energy of the Africans in America is being channelled this way [at home] and the energy of the Africans in South America this way, and the energy of the Africans in the West Indies is channelled this way, then we will not be able to put our energies together.'

Questions to Stokely Carmichael

At the end of his presentation, Carmichael was asked a number of questions.

First, since he had admitted that class struggle was 'the motivating struggle, the major struggle,' yet he failed to mention class further in his analysis. What did he see as the relationship of class struggle and nationalism.

Secondly, he was asked for a clear explanation of how liberating Africa

would, in practical terms, liberate us in this country.

Thirdly, if he recognised any class composition of the Black community, since he had not mentioned it, or did he view all Black people as having the same relationship to capital.

Fourthly, he was asked whether or not the analysis that 'one nationalism plus one nationalism equals internationalism,' was a mechanical rather than a scientific and dialectical assertion.

Finally, if he believes, as he asserted, that the unity of Black and white workers was a necessity for struggle in this country, then why did he not speak in terms of obstacles to be overcome rather than implying that that which is necessary is yet impossible because of the betrayal factor.

Carmichael responded: 'The only question is what is the proper nationalism of the Black man in America. I can't answer the questions posed to me, because I know that African nationalism is my proper nationalism and Pan-Africanism is the highest expression of that. Once I know that what I do next follows logically.'

Later Carmichael was asked what specific kinds of things Black people in this country should do to aid the liberation of Africa.

Carmichael responded: 'If you accept Pan-Africanism, then it means that you must have an all-Black party in the United States . . . that is a tactic. What we are struggling for is to see if we can agree on a common objective — [the liberation and unification of Africa] — in which all of us will channel our energies toward. Then we will work out specific tactics.'

Abdul Alkalimat



Abdul Alkalimat of the People's College in Nashville, Tennessee, presented the following analysis.

Initially, he outlined four basic questions.

1. What is our problem — the historical development and current structure?

2. Who are our friends and who are our enemies?

3. What are the correct solutions to our problems — the maximum and minimum programs for change?

4. What are the differences and similarities between our struggle in the United States and the struggle on the African continent?

Turning to the first question of how Black people are exploited and oppressed, he referred to two prevailing views. First was the view that racial oppression was the problem, all Black people are the same, and race is the lever that turns history and the single most important fact of life. Second was the view that class exploitation was the only problem of capitalist society and class struggle will automatically eliminate all other problems.

Alkalimat asserted, 'both of these views are incorrect'. He stated that the correct view would 'point to the total character of exploitation and oppression, wearing blinders to neither class nor race.'

He spoke of classes as 'based on how large groups of people are organised relative to the production and distribution of wealth . . . in capitalist society. The capitalist buys the labor power of workers at a price less than the value created by those workers. The difference is expropriated for private gain as the key way the working class is exploited.'

He went on to talk about the increasing concentration of ownership of the means of production and distribution into what became 'monopoly capitalism — the basis of imperialism.' He then stated 'class struggle, meaning workers fighting as a class in their class interests, is strategically against capitalism as a whole.'

He characterised racial groups as 'based on genetic character as manifested in physical traits, such as skin color, hair texture, etc.' He then traced the general

history of racial oppression in the modern world pointing out that in the case of Black people in the U.S., 'this general racial oppression has been transformed into a new form of national oppression.'

He continued, saying that this new form was because of the critically important fact that Black people were moulded into a nation in the last part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century in the Black Belt of the South.'

He quoted the generally accepted historical materialist definition of a nation as a historically evolved stable community of people with a common territory, economic life, and psychological makeups manifested in a community of culture.'

Therefore, he added, 'all subsequent racial oppression can scientifically now be referred to as national oppression in the context of our national development.'

Having defined capitalism, classes and national oppression, Alkalimat noted: 'Scientifically, while there are many, many contradictions in society, there is always, at any given stage, one principle contradiction, only one.'

He stated: 'Historically, Black people have been central to the development of capitalism and it has been, to a great extent, through the exploitation of Black people that the capitalist development of Europe and North America was possible.'

He explained that the same situation exists today with the difference being the shift of the masses of Blacks from agricultural production in the rural south to industrial production in the urban areas of the south and north. He added: 'We are indispensable to the production of steel, autos, meat packing and a whole new set of service jobs that have been almost exclusively ours.'

Alkalimat then declared: 'We fit directly into the class analysis under capitalism. The principal contradiction is the class contradiction and Black people fit essentially into the exploited class of workers. In this contradiction, national oppression and class exploitation are joined.'

Continuing, he said: 'There are three secondary contradictions, that while not the principal contradiction, are very important and reflect the dialectical struggle of national oppression and class exploitation. First, the contradiction between all Black people and monopoly capitalism and it is precisely this contradiction that we struggle to overcome by waging a Black liberation struggle and moving toward the goal of national liberation.'

'Secondly, there is the contradiction between white and Black workers — the contradiction that the ruling class uses to keep the working class divided. And third, the class contradiction inside the Black community, the contradiction that keeps the Black liberation struggle from developing.'

Alkalimat then talked of the ruling class strategy for continued domination, noting that it uses the double strategy of dividing

workers and reinforcing a 'lucky servant class in the Black community.'

He cited examples of how those tactics were used during the reconstruction period, again during the populist era and again during the sixties — all periods characterised by an upsurge of struggle and developing unity within the working class movement and the Black liberation movement.

Speaking of the sixties, he used the lives and movements of King and Malcolm to stress his point. 'King was moving to form a united poor people's campaign that focussed on defending the rights of workers like the Memphis sanitation workers. Moreover, he had a strong anti-imperialist stand, as evidenced by his stand on Vietnam and he had the respect of progressive people throughout the world. He was murdered.'

'Malcolm was building unity within the Black community, developing a militant consciousness toward struggle and was boldly presenting anti-capitalist views. Malcolm was received by African heads of state and had the respect of the national liberation leaders. He was murdered.'

In the place of these men, Alkalimat asserted, capitalists have 'projected petty bourgeois opportunists, who have violated the militant tradition of King, and race theorists who distort Malcolm's motion towards revolution and instead turn toward cultism.'

Alkalimat summed this portion of his presentation with a quote from Mao Tse Tung, which said: 'The struggle of the Black people in the United States is bound to merge with the American workers movement and this will eventually end the criminal rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class.'

Who are our friends and who are our enemies

In answer to his second question, Alkalimat stated: 'Our enemies are the entire capitalist class, particularly the leading elements of the monopoly capitalists and the high petty bourgeois servants of the monopolies.' He included in this group, trade union bureaucrats like George Meany and Leonard Woodcock, the foundations run by the likes of Ford and Rockefeller, as well as government agents like Nixon and Kissinger. He said: 'These are our enemies, clearly and always.'

He said friends are 'the masses of Black people, the white working class and the peasants and workers of third world peoples inside the country.' He said these groupings were friends 'because their objective interest lies with socialist revolution.'

He explained that there could be absolutely no denial that the contradiction among these friends is sharp and the level of unity is low. 'But,' he continued, 'things can change and we must make a distinction between the methods used to resolve non-antagonistic contradictions

among friends and antagonistic contradictions with the enemy.'

He went on to state that he felt that the national liberation struggle should not be separated from the class struggle and declared 'the only revolutionary nationalists today are those who are guided by the science of the working class and are simultaneously fighting to destroy the capitalist system.'

He further declared: 'If there can be no unity at a particular time with a specific section of the white working class, then the masses of Black people will continue to fight and will eventually overcome the disunity of the working class.'

'And if there can be no unity around a particular struggle with the middle strata of the Black community, then the masses of Black people will continue to fight for national liberation and win them over or expose the role they play and deal with them as agents of the bourgeoisie.'

What is the solution to our problem — the minimum and maximum program for change

In answer to his third question, Alkalimat stated that the maximum goal must be socialist revolution because 'there can be no solution under capitalism.'

'Defense, democracy and development,' were the key aspects of the minimum program he outlined. 'We must defend Black workers from the attacks of the monopolies and by so doing, defend the interests of the total Black community . . . We must fight for democracy inside the trade unions and by so doing, raise the banner of democracy for all people . . . We must develop tools of struggle, organisations which mould the Black working class into a fighting, class conscious sector of the proletariat, and organisations which mould Black people into a vital revolutionary force . . .'

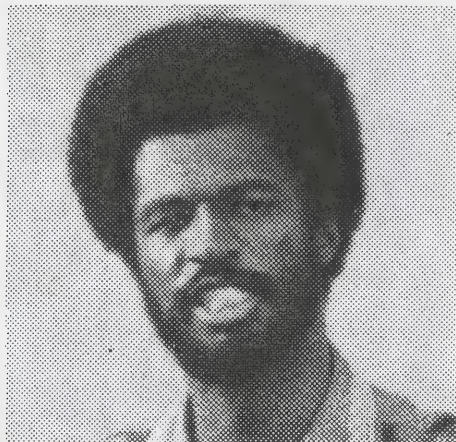
The similarities and differences between our struggle here and the struggle on the African continent
The African revolution is an integral part of the world socialist revolution.

Alkalimat stated that the struggle in Africa and the struggle in the U.S. are similar in that both situations are subject to the same general laws of social development and both are part of the world socialist revolution.

He cited important differences as first the fact that 'the United States is an advanced capitalist country and Black people are a part of this advanced industrial or clerical working class, while Africa is dominated by a peasant majority. Secondly, whether we like it or not, Black people have, in fact, been struggling within this country while Africa, by virtue of its colonial history, is characterized by state to state relations and state to state struggle.'

Finally, he asserted the need for efforts toward the building of a revolutionary party of the entire working class to lead the struggle for socialist revolution.

Owusu Sadaukai



Owusu Sadaukai, former Chairperson of the African Liberation Support Committee, began his presentation by admitting that he personally was presently engaged in intense internal struggle.

He began: 'I come before you as a person who quite honestly and frankly is struggling with a lot of things. I've been struggling with some of the things that I have said over the past three to four years; struggling with some of the positions which now that I understand things a little bit better, I think were incorrect.'

He continued: 'I see myself as a human being who is both a product of the environment that I live in, and hopefully a person who is contributing to changing the nature of that environment. And because of that dialectic, it is always possible to have said something in 1972 that is no longer adequate to describe how I see the world in 1974.'

Turning to the conference theme of racism and imperialism, Sadaukai first sought to give some definition to some of the terms he would use in his presentation. He said racism is 'a feeling on the part of one race that they are superior to the people of another race for no other reason than they are of that race. So when we speak of white racism, we are talking about the feeling on the part of white people that they are superior to black people for no other reason than they are white.'

Sadaukai further explained, 'it is my belief that racism is a product of the early development of capitalism. That is to say, that racism developed as part of the superstructure developed out of the material base of capitalism.'

'By superstructure, I mean the ideas, the beliefs, the institutions and systems that deal with matters such as government, religion, morals and values. Racism as part of the superstructure, continues to affect the development of the base even as the base affects its development on an ongoing basis.'

He continued: 'To look at it more concretely, racism is and has been used as a justification to keep Black people out of jobs. The end result of this is and was

the continued existence of a surplus labor force which in effect depresses the wages of the entire working class.

The ruling class, however, used the fact that we are out of work to say that niggers don't want to work, they're lazy and all they want to do is get on welfare, thereby, reinforcing the racist ideas and notions on the part of all sectors of the white community.

'So in effect, racism had its origin in capitalist development, but it then became more than just an idea as its existence as a superstructural phenomena justifies racist practices that benefit the base even as they dialectically reinforced its own existence.'

Capitalism

Sadaukai then moved on to define capitalism. 'Capitalism is a political, economic and social system that has four basic characteristics. First of all, capitalism is a complex commodity economy, an economy based on the massive production and distribution of goods and services.

'Secondly, in a capitalist system, a small number of vultures — bloodsuckers — are able to own and control the means of production. The means of production are the instruments of labor plus the objects of labor. If you are working in a mine, the mine is the object of labor, the tools that you use to extract the ore from the mine are the instruments of your labor. The objects of labor plus the instruments of labor form the means of production.'

'So in fact, you have socialized production and private appropriation to the extent that in the United States, less than two thousand individuals control 80 per cent of the wealth and less than 15 families control 80 per cent of that.'

Sadaukai cited the Rockefeller empire as an example of the extreme concentration of wealth. He read a list of some of the corporations controlled by this one family. The list included six banks, which control 20 per cent of all banking in the U.S.; American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T), the largest corporation in the world with 700,000 employees; Exxon and 12 other oil companies controlling the majority of the oil production and sales in the U.S.; two of the largest life insurance companies — Metropolitan and Equitable — controlling one-fourth of all life insurance companies in the country.

Also on the list were Consolidated Edison, the country's largest utility; Pan-American, the largest air line; Anaconda Copper, the largest copper producers; and Borden's, the country's second largest food corporation.

Sadaukai then described the third characteristic of capitalism. 'Since a small number of people control the means of production, the masses of people must work for them in order to survive so that people become slaves to a wage.'

'The fourth characteristic is that the whole thing is based on profit. It's impor-

tant that we understand where the profit comes from. It comes from the blood, sweat and tears of the people who are working in this society.'

To illustrate his point, Sadaukai said: 'If you work somewhere, if you get paid \$2 an hour, you probably produced something worth \$10 an hour, so what happens to the other \$8? When you get your check, you have to pay rent, buy food, clothes and get transportation, all of that so you can get back to work the next day. The same people who ripped you off before you got your check, are the same people you have to get your food and other things from, and since they don't give you enough money to get it with cash, you've got to get it on credit — from them.'

'So in the final analysis, you're getting ripped off before you get your check, after you get your check, and then you're forced to pay interest for the privilege of getting ripped off!'

Imperialism

Sadaukai then defined imperialism. 'Imperialism is the higher extension of capitalism.' He quoted Amílcar Cabral's definition of imperialism, 'the worldwide expression of the search for profits and the ever increasing accumulation of surplus value by monopoly finance capital centred in two parts of the world — Europe and North America.'

Sadaukai followed with Lenin's definition of imperialism. 'Imperialism is capitalism in the stage of development, when the dominance of the monopolies and finance capital is established, in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance, in which the division of world among the international trust has begun and in which the division of all territories of the world among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.'

Sadaukai then stated: 'The critical thing about both definitions is that it moves the discussion of imperialism from abstract, sterile academic conceptualizations to precise definitions based on the real oppression of real people throughout the world.'

'Clearly Black people are a part of this world reality. Therefore, we are obviously affected by the pervasiveness of imperialism in the world today. I say that because there are those among us who say that capitalism and imperialism are the white boy's thing, it ain't about Black people. Not only is that position illogical, it is at best, absurd.'

Cultural aggression

Sadaukai then began to deal with the concept of cultural aggression. He pointed out that since the development of culture depends upon and is determined by the material development of a society, then in analysing the act of cultural aggression suffered by Africa at the hands of Europe. 'We see that the key infringement was upon the logical development of our productive forces. They were able to usurp

control of our productive forces and consequently change the course of our history.'

Sadaukai stated that, therefore, 'in the end it was, and is, not that they took our language or our drums or our artifacts that is the major factor. It is that they took control of our productive forces and solidified that by destroying, where possible, the existence of our spiritual reality by the consolidation and internalisation of racism. Now from that point on, Brothers and Sisters, whether we want to deal with it or not, our relationship to white people and our relationship with each other was qualitatively changed. Our existence as African people was fundamentally altered and today, we are still struggling with the effects of that alteration.'

He then went on to say that 'this historical turn makes it necessary, for example, to examine the claim that as an African people, we all have a common history and a common source of oppression. It is probably more accurate to say that we have a common heritage, but our history as an African people, began to vary at the point of the slave trade.'

'We have been and continue to be exploited by the same oppressive system, yet this oppression manifests itself in different historical experiences at least in the last three or four hundred years.'

'If we do not deal with this reality, we will be left saying that a peasant in Ethiopia and an auto worker in Detroit have the same historical experiences, and consequently their method of struggle will be the same simply because they are both Black or more precisely, simply because we are of African heritage.'

Sadaukai then put forth what he stated was the outstanding question. 'How can we get it back or indeed can we ever get it back as it was or do we have to see that our existence has been unalterably changed, that is, we are now in the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, England; so when we discuss regaining control of our culture, our being, indeed our reality, the question is where and how?'

What is revolution?

Sadaukai stated that we need to talk about gaining a clearer understanding of the essence of what revolution is. 'We can begin to understand that Black Power was a tremendous necessity for us as Black people to give us a feeling of worth as Black human beings, a feeling that we as a people, had a beauty that accrued to us as a people. It was an important phenomena, but it was not a revolution.'

'A revolution is a fundamental change in the nature of political and economic system; that there has to be a transfer of power of the means of production out of the hands of the vultures into the hands of the masses of the people, using the state as the initial apparatus to consolidate this transfer of power in the interests of

the working people of society.'

Sadaukai continued that secondly: 'We must understand that revolution is a process and that this means that in order to make revolution, we have to get out and get involved in the day-to-day processes and struggle of our people. If we don't understand this, then what happens is that those of us who claim to be revolutionary become so revolutionary that we cannot get involved in the revolution and we end up being five or six or seven of us sitting in back rooms somewhere coming up with theories that are unrelated to the problems of our people.'

Study the science of revolution

Next Sadaukai emphasised that 'we must study the classics, Marx, Lenin, Mao, and only an idiot would not understand that you have to study Cabral, Toure, and those Brothers and Sisters who are waging struggle on the African continent. How can you not study Cabral?'

'But you know Brothers and Sisters, I know it is difficult, because it was difficult for me to even consider the idea of reading Marx and Lenin. For three or four years, I came around and told some of you Brothers and Sisters to forget them 'cause the white boy made it.' I never told you not to use any other knowledge you could find.'

He then said: 'Finally, we're talking about a situation where we begin to produce an organisation of revolutionaries, of revolutionaries that will study and will fight and that those revolutionaries will organise in particular segments of the Black community, students, unemployed, secretaries, workers, all sectors, but the primary sector must be the working class.'

Why the working class

Why the working class? Because clearly the overwhelming number of our people are in the working class. They are in the most objective position to seize and control the means of production. There is a difference between taking over a library on a university campus and taking over General Motors. The dialectics of capitalist development produces the seeds of its own negation. It brings large numbers of workers into socialised production which gives rise to a collective, organised struggle against the ruling class.'

He went on to say that we should also build a United Front inside the Black community because there are intense contradictions between the ruling class and the entire Black community. He then stated that: 'We should support all anti-imperialist struggles throughout the world, starting with Africa, because of our heritage, because of the sentiments of our people, but we must support whoever is objectively struggling against imperialism, and incidentally, there should never be another time when we miss a thing like we did the Vietnam War.'

Personal statement

Sadaukai closed with a personal statement. 'In the final analysis, all of this will be validated by practice. And in the last five years, I have spent too much time in airplanes and running from place to place begging for money for Malcolm X, asking people to support the Malcolm X Liberation University and ALSC to do this, to do that, all of which had its positive value.'

'But the problem is that by doing that in a constant ongoing basis, you begin to lose sight of the real reality, the gut level problems of our people. So I promise you that for the next 12 to 18 months, you can find me in Durham, North Carolina, dealing with the problems of Black People, trying, in fact, to organise the Black working class and organise the Black community so that I can learn, because too many of us who claim to be revolutionaries and speechmakers, haven't visited Black People lately.'

Imamu Baraka



Imamu Baraka, of The Congress of African Peoples, began by quoting Lenin's definition of imperialism relating it to an historical description of its development from early capitalism. He then moved on to the question of racism: 'There can be no doubt that racism as it pervades the world is an integral part of the capitalist mode of production. And just as imperialism intensified the contradiction in capitalism. It also spread the ideology of racism around the world. But not only as ideas but as institutions, systems, ways of life and values — ironically, all of which were also imposed on the subject people themselves.'

Cultural aggression

Baraka then talked about cultural aggression and the fact that it was and still is a natural and necessary part of the system of imperialism. 'Since imperialism has issued most essentially out of Europe and Euro-America, it is almost always accompanied by the attempted Europeanization or cultural destruction of the subject peoples. This attempt at Europeanization and/or cultural destruction represents the negation of the culture of the oppressed and usually the appearance of racial oppression, where not only would the people be oppressed in their own country because of their race, but also attempted to destroy their values, their way of life, their institutions which is their culture.'

Cultural analysis

Baraka then stressed the necessity of making a cultural analysis of ourselves as a part of the process of developing the correct strategy for liberation. He stated that such an analysis would: 'Answer the question of who we are, how we have lived, how we are living, how must we live in order to liberate ourselves.'

He went on to say: 'Too often imperialist domination, particularly as it is manifested among the petty bourgeois intellectuals that Cabral describes, will set us to accepting ideas from outside our own culture simply because they are that.' Baraka pointed out that this tendency can lead us to mechanically apply theoretical positions from other situations without

analyzing our own concrete material conditions.

Baraka stated, however, that 'this must not be interpreted, as some primitive nationalists do, as a retreat from the advantages of utilizing international revolutionary experience. We must learn from everyone and everything and deal with anyone and anything that can advance our struggle.'

'It is simply that we must begin our theoretical struggle with an analysis of our own social structure, which is of necessity, a cultural as well as a political and economic analysis.'

He then states that 'Black people's struggles must be the organized political expression of our culture as it is a dynamic synthesis of the material and spiritual conditions of our society.'

Baraka stated that the importance of analysing the living reality of our culture is that 'if we make analytical and political thrusts and economic resistance utilizing forms and expressions and modes that combine the many positive variants of our cultural expression, we will invariably stimulate the masses of our people, from whom these expressions and ideas and modes are drawn from in the first place, but only reorganized to articulate the burning question of our people and the world and give back equally articulate answers and directions.'

Tasks of the struggle

In the next section of his presentation, Baraka began outlining what he saw as the general tasks of our struggle. He stated: 'If the principal problem is the struggle against imperialist domination with the realization that this must include the conscious and deliberate struggle against racism, whether it takes the form of economic exploitation, political repression, police brutality, or cultural aggression, then the question arises, how can we struggle in the most effective way? First, it seems evident that imperialism has oppressed us nationally, racially, and culturally in order to make profits, but also as a result of the reproduction of racist systems and institutions, philosophy, and way of life that perpetuates itself with no specific profit motive, although that is its base.'

Baraka then gave his definition of race and nation. 'A race, in so far as social interreaction is concerned, may be thought of as any people who are distinguished in social relations with other people by their physical characteristics. A nation, on the other hand by one definition, can be thought of as a tribal group conscious of cultural unity. So actually to say nation is to say culture.'

A subordinate nation

He then went on to say that: 'Therefore, as a people, we are Africans in North America, a subordinate nation which is what national minority means, a dependent or subject nation as Lenin provided.

Oliver Cox says that the term 'minority group' has been used, but incorrectly. Are the white people in South Africa or Rhodesia a national minority? Are the Israelis in Palestine a national minority? They would be a national minority only if they had no power. The position of the opposing group is not conveyed by the antonym majority, but by such words as dominant or subordinate. The struggle between national groups is a struggle for power.'

He then went on to reiterate that: 'National oppression is an inherent part of capitalism regardless of the race of the nation. That is the political and economic and social subjugation of other less developed, smaller nations within the same state by a dominant nationality.'

'Capitalism is inconceivable without racial exploitation. But it must be recognized that one concept that informs our national liberation movement is that every nation has the right to self determination, to paraphrase Lenin, and that any federation entered into between national groups have to be entered into voluntarily by those nations, and that this right must be supported by all socialists even though they might think that the idea of national self-determination as a particular national group might be "unfeasible".'

Citing specifically the Irish and Black people in North America whom he called 'subject or dependent nations', he said these kinds of national revolutions would certainly turn into socialist revolutions and 'that the right to self-determination by such national groups, and the attendant call for secession and separation, are, in the case of clear rebellions against oppressor nations and imperialism in general, clearly revolutionary.'

The content of black nationalism

Based on his interpretation of the analysis stated above, Baraka then talked about the conditions of national oppression among Black people in this country and what he felt was the correct content of Black nationalism.

'It is the power motive,' he said, 'that should inform our racial and cultural nationalism. Our oppression, which is at base economics, is perpetuated at one level as racial oppression. We are economically oppressed to the extent that we are because of our race. This, in turn, creates and reconsolidates our culture, that is, the way we live and our formal and informal record of that process.'

'Because of this constant, continuous reconsolidation of culture through racial oppression, based on the intent of economic exploitation, we persist in America as a national group. Its basic stability is racial and cultural.'

Therefore, in Baraka's view, we have the moral right to national self determination and must wage a national liberation struggle based on revolutionary nationalist ideology in order to secure this right in

fact. Such a struggle, he analysed, is 'profoundly progressive and revolutionary' in that it strikes at the very heart of the imperialist system, and must, in order to be really successful, pass over into socialist revolution.

Baraka again quoted Cabral: 'National liberation is based on the inalienable right of each people to have its own history.'

Baraka went on to say: 'Racism, as the cutting edge of capitalist exploitation, has denied us the right.'

Our national productive forces

Again he quoted Cabral: 'Imperialist domination signifies the negation of the historical process of a dominated people by means of violent usurpation of the freedom of development of the national productive forces.'

Baraka continued: 'What are our national productive forces? The major and decisive part of the productive force are Black people whose development has been violently obstructed by the development of capitalism and racism.'

'That small group of Blacks who do control some means of production, and have exploitative relationships to wage laborers, do not have control of the total means of production that we make ultimate claim to. Black people can lay claim to that percentage of the means of production of the total society that would be ours by virtue of our work and needs.'

'The struggle against racial oppression is basically a struggle for national liberation. The objective of national liberation is to free the process of development of the national productive forces, the people and the means of production.'

'Not only our people must be free, and they are the ultimate makers of history, but finally we must struggle to free the means of production from monopoly capitalist domination. It seems critical that we must always keep in mind that we are struggling to liberate ourselves as a people, and also to destroy capitalism and bring about the advent of socialism.'

Independent nationalist character

Baraka then moved on to defend what he saw as the independent national character of the liberation struggle from those lines that he perceived as trying to deny this and to submerge the liberation struggle in the general struggle for working class revolution and socialism.

In this regard he stated: 'The fact of racism in America is real, not theoretical, just as the fact of our racial distinction is real. When we project our struggle as simply a class struggle, or render ourselves invisible within the phraseology of a struggle simply between the working masses and the ruling class with no further revelation of the essential reality of the existence of any potential transnational, interracial working class; to say as some multi-national formations do, that they represent the entire working class, is not to go to the

depths of analysis and investigations of American society. Racism renders talk about the entire working class, at this time, as idealist conjecture.'

Baraka continued: 'Dialectically our struggle takes on a nationalist character if only because it is a struggle, at one point, against racial oppression. But there is a class nature to our struggle itself, since we understand the economic reasons behind that oppression, though by the time of imperialism the white ruling class and the white masses of Europe and America were convinced that people of color around the world should be exploited because we were colored and therefore inferior.'

'But in our class relationship to the ruling class the complication, again, is the racial character of capitalist oppression. The greater portion of that monopoly capitalist ruling class is white though that is finally secondary to the fact that they are a ruling class.'

Nation-class

Baraka moved on to deal with the question of what, precisely, is our relationship, as a people, to the monopoly capitalist ruling class. In answering that question he put forth the idea that Black people as a whole are proletarian, that the necessary relationship between an oppressed nationality and the oppressor power is a class relationship with the entire oppressed nationality functioning as a working class. 'Capitalist and certainly imperialist domination proletarianized our whole people. Race relations are not caste relations, they are not reproduced simply by families. They are labor, capital, and profits relations. Therefore race relations have a proletarian-bourgeois relationship and are hence a political class relation.'

'For this reason, just as Cabral and Nkrumah can speak of nation-class in characterizing our formation in struggle against colonialism, so we must understand that proletarian is not merely a social class definition as is working class, but a formation of struggle. The struggle against national oppression calls for a national liberation struggle as a nation-class.'

Black vanguard party

Based on his analysis, Baraka, in the last section of his presentation, spoke of the organisational needs of the Black liberation struggle.

He stated that our struggle 'demands the mobilization and organization of the nationalist forces within the framework of, and by the action of a strong, well organized, well structured political organization.'

Baraka goes on to talk about Lenin's concept of a vanguard party and applies this to what he sees to be the needs of our struggle today. 'The one thing that Lenin was firm about regardless of conditions varying from country to country, was the need for a vanguard party whose members

all recognize the necessary difference between themselves and the revolutionary masses, and who have a firm ideology, programmatic summation, and discipline before they go to the masses, interact with them and give them leadership.'

Baraka asserted: 'If this distinction is blurred, what comes into being is not a revolutionary vanguard party, but a mass party, no matter how small in size, which incorporates into its membership those who should actually be its followers and supporters. Such a party cannot lead the masses, it can only tailgate and follow after them.'

Baraka continued: 'Lenin is relevant for his concept of building a revolutionary vanguard party on the basis of that section of the population in a given country which is both the most oppressed, and the chief revolutionary social force.'

If the chief revolutionary social force is the peasant; as in China, then base the party on the peasantry. If it is the Black masses, as in the United States, then build the revolutionary party on the basis of a Black revolutionary social force.

Baraka closed his presentation saying: 'Building strong disciplined organizations based on the correct ideology, based on nationalism, Pan-Africanism and socialism, an analysis of the concrete conditions, we are able to actively pursue concrete programs to mobilize, organize and politicize the masses and move them objectively to transform the entire society. And in so doing we help alter objective and subjective conditions throughout the world. . . .'

Chile

Comrades,

It was good to see the article, 'Chile, the Working Class Road to Socialism' concentrate on 'the great working-class struggles that took place during the Allende regime,' and to analyse the Chilean events from that point of view. Leoncio rightly breaks with the main habits in this country: either of looking at Chile only in terms of the coup and what went wrong; or of hiding the autonomous class struggle and identifying the working class with the development of the UP government and the traditional organisations (especially the trade-unions).

But having said that, the real questions arise: what then was the content of the working class struggle in Chile? How did the autonomy develop? And what was its relation to the UP, the political parties and most importantly, the institutions of the bourgeois state? But unfortunately it's here that the article goes off course and ends up, paradoxically, by *devaluing* the level reached by the Chilean workers' struggle.

Leoncio's main claim is that the primary antagonism in Chilean society after 1970 (though before as well) was between, on the one hand, the UP delegated by the bourgeoisie to carry through a project of economic growth and productivity increase, and on the other hand, an insubordinate working-class, refusing this project and implementing its own anti-capitalist programme, 'to work less and get more'. To back this up, the author puts a lot of emphasis on workers' absenteeism, and labour indiscipline which, it is claimed, reached a 'record high' in the Allende years.

The scenario-capitalist development versus working-class refusal — is immediately suspect in the Chilean context, and is very much an imposition of a European model. For instance, after describing the working class struggle against productivity, against production etc., the author tries to fit into his or her schema, the fact of the 'march of the empty pots . . . a group of bourgeois women had come out onto the streets . . . in protest at the general decline in productivity'.

Now this description totally obscures the realities behind that protest: *it was a clever, right-wing protest primarily aimed at the food shortages, which were in fact caused by the ruling-class sabotage and destruction of agricultural production.* The author ignores that in Chile the bourgeoisie never struggled for production: they refused to invest and tried to accelerate the economic crisis. And they did this, of course, because of working class struggle. But not their struggle against 'production' as such; *rather their struggle for the control, organisation and management of production.*

We should understand that in a country like Chile, the development of the productive forces against capitalist underdevelopment, is an important and radical

component of working class consciousness. Of course Allende was putting forward an inter-classist 'better for production'. But we underestimate the Chilean workers struggle, unless we recognise the extent to which they put forward and enacted an expropriation of the economy: putting it into their own hands and making it work — as best they could — in their own interests. At times Leoncio recognises this, for instance when he talks about the struggle to control distribution in 1972. But his recognition is irregular and not consistent with the main definitions he gives the struggle. For instance he'll write: 'Workers control and other reforms in the hierarchy of the workplace were immediately seized upon by the workers in order to work less and get more.' Now we don't have the absenteeism figures for Chile, but much nearer the point would be to point out that 'workers control and other reforms' were taken up and transformed by the workers to establish real power over the Chilean economy. Because the most glaring omission in the article — which purports to be about working class struggle — is the lack of a single mention to the cordones industriales and the comandos comunales: the widespread base organisations of the working class through which factory occupations were carried out and the embryonic autonomous power was built up. But of course if you tend to see mainly 'refusal' — absenteeism, labour and indiscipline — then you don't need to mention organisations like factory and territorial councils. 1917 without the soviets.

But all this is still to bring us to the main point. Nowhere does the 'work less, get more' perspective lead the author to approach the key question: that of state power. In an analysis of the Chilean working-class the article does not even approach the question of the organs of the alternative class power, and their preparation for the frontal clash with the bourgeois state. Leoncio says Allende was wrong on this point, but that's all. Nowhere in the process of 'refusal' does he, or can he, trace the line of development towards a revolutionary take over. He suggests the need to arm the masses, but what does that mean outside of concrete organisations of the working class capable of waging a revolutionary war. Unfortunately you cannot 'refuse' the armed clash. *In a nutshell, Leoncio talks about insubordination; to understand Chile, we have to talk about organising that insubordination to seize power and take over.*

Linked to this, is the question of party organisation. Again the author works off very false oppositions: the working class organising itself (though not it seems in 'organisations' such as comandos) versus the mediation of parties. In fact the Chilean workers did find themselves in allegiance to parties — and despite the important contradictions between their struggle

and some of their 'own' parties — this cannot be ignored and wishfully replaced by a 'pure' working-class, free of ideology and reformist allegiances, capable of clearly 'using' the parties for their own ends. Why was the working class still so unprepared for the coup if it had, spontaneously, freed itself from the UP strategy? Who was using who on September 11th, 1973? Despite the enormous gains in 'popular power', reformism was always hegemonic inside the working-class. And that brings up another major question ignored by the article: the struggle of the revolutionary organisations of Chile, to create a coherent and hegemonic vanguard capable of uniting the masses around a revolutionary programme for power and replacing the political leadership of repression. A development that historically has not evolved spontaneously just out of whatever level of alienation that the proletariat reaches.

There are other questions that arise, which we can only mention here. For example, Big Flame is in disagreement with your assessment of the UP government. Our position is stated elsewhere. Leoncio's is crudely one-sided to the point, of wholesale inaccuracy. It's true that for a short time, the bourgeoisie did try to use the UP; and the UP did try to accommodate itself and the working class to sections of the bourgeoisie. But to identify UP/bourgeoisie so closely as Leoncio does, is just incorrect. The bourgeoisie as a whole campaigned violently against Allende's candidacy in 1970; when he was forced on them, half of them wanted a coup immediately and the other half — on certain strict guarantees — were prepared nervously to try him out. *None of them ever co-operated with the UP.* The answer to capital's crisis in Chile was called the Chilean road to socialism?

A member of Merseyside
Big Flame

Comrades,

I want to begin by getting a problem of method out of the way; that is the *biased* nature of our knowledge about Chile. As a political activist, I have certain preconceptions which affect how I interpret the information I get about what happened in Chile; it also determines which Chilean comrades I seek out, who I get on better with etc. And of course, these preconceptions are determined by how I see the class-struggle developing in the U.K. and what kind of revolutionary organisations I see as helpful in the development of that process. In Big Flame there is no consensus on that point, I would be hoping to represent the views of some of its members by saying that we see ourselves developing as a revolutionary organisation that is Marxist, not-Trotskyist but neither do we believe that the *proletariat* will get it together without the

support and guidance of militants who are up front in their revolutionary politics; in this sense we are vanguardist, but we do not see ourselves as Leninist. Our ideas on how we should organise ourselves and how to relate to the class struggle have been influenced by the writings of Lotta Continua and the M.I.R.; and that is why our pamphlet on Chile contains a section on the M.I.R. We have strong criticisms to make of both these groups but they do not alter the fact that we believe that both of them provide contemporary models of revolutionary organisation that are an essential part of our learning process. To get back to Leoncio's article; what are his sources?, what political organisation (or none) does he feel closest to?

What is for sure is that the views presented in the article as fact are only one interpretation of what happened in Chile from amongst the many possible ones. Two interpretations available in English can be summarised as follows:

1. The CP interpretation which sees the UP government as a government of the people that was brutally overthrown by U.S. imperialism. Even now the CP won't abandon — they never will — their 'peaceful road' nonsense and CP militants I have talked to say it will be different in this country because the army is 'working-class!'

2. The I.S. view (as represented by Prieto's book *The Gorillas are Amongst Us*) which sees the UP as a capitalist government, slags off the M.I.R. as guerrillaist, and claims that the Cordones and the Commandos could have become the organs with which the working-class took power, but they were sabotaged by the UP and the M.I.R.

It is a typically opportunist act of IS to publish his book because Prieto's perspective is fundamentally different from theirs; he would give no support to their aim of 'building a revolutionary party in this country'; he believed that what was needed was more cordones, not a party.

3. Leoncio's interpretation which sees the UP government as a capitalist tool, slags all the groups off, supports the working-class movement but does not even mention the Cordones (industrial assemblies) and the Commandos (area assemblies) that were the way this working-class organised itself. (Are they left out because they smack too much of organisation?).

Our own interpretation is to be found in our pamphlet and in the points brought from Merseyside Big Flame's letter. I have only one general point to make and that is that unless we are blind or deaf, history teaches us time and time again that in periods of intense class-struggle and social change, individuals, groups, and parties change and their relationship to each other change.

1. The relationship between the UP government and the proletariat changed between 1970-73; as it could not break with bourgeois legality, the UP government was forced in the end to repress the

proletariat. But it is an ahistorical joke to use this to say that the government was part of capitalist strategy.

2. The M.I.R. changed; from a guevarist/ guerilla organisation before '69 to a mass based organisation involved in most grass-root struggles. Leoncio's sarcastic remark that the Mapuche Indians 'were the first target of the M.I.R.'s activism' forgets that there was a rare example of a revolutionary group going where the struggle needed them and not waiting for the struggle to come to them. Hundreds of M.I.R.istas went to the countryside and in collaboration with the Mapuche set up the MCR (Movement of revolutionary peasants) that was involved in the violent land seizures that lasted throughout the Frei and Allende periods.

3. *The type of revolutionary organisation needed, changed.* I believe that the lower the level of class-struggle, the more there is the need of vanguard revolutionary organisations who have an important function of keeping alive certain revolutionary ideas and propaganda (in all its forms). As the class struggle hots up and more and more proletarians become revolutionary, there is less the need for revolutionary organisations that are in some way cut off from the people. At that point it is the duty of revolutionaries to help in the setting up of mass revolutionary forms of organisation that are better suited to the needs of the proletariat in a pre-revolutionary situation; the Soviets, the Workers Councils, the Commandos and Cordones. And this is what groups like the M.I.R. and the MAPU did in October '72, they (more or less) dissolved their organisations into the assemblies. At the same time, they were well enough aware of the possibility of a coup to know the necessity to keep a clandestine infrastructure going. After slagging off the M.I.R. throughout his book, Prieto ends by writing (page. 74): 'The M.I.R. is the only organisation that has been able to save its leading cadres and protect them underground . . . ' and he goes on to say that if the M.I.R. takes the right political course, it may have a positive role to play in the 'reorganisation of the working-class movement'. Leoncio has nothing to say about the resistance, for him another nail has been hammered into the coffin of the international working-class and that's that.

As for Chile, there is a resistance being fought. Now, probably more than ever, the class-struggle in Chile needs revolutionary organisations that can cope with the clandestinity (and arms) a victorious resistance will need. The M.I.R. has made it quite clear that the 'revolution will be made by the Revolutionary Army of the People'; they and other groups will be a part of that army.

A member of Big Flame (W. London)

Next month Race Today will reply to some of the fundamental issues raised in these Backlashes. We hope Leoncio will too.

Black Nurses

Sir,

The main argument of the article on nurses was that agency nurses have a clearer understanding of their exploitation, their wage slave position, than the nursing and hospital staff employed directly by the NHS. In particular they are not mystified by the concept of vocation and the hierarchy that reinforces professionalism. This may well be true as the extracts testify, but it begs several questions and avoids others.

Firstly the very fact that NHS nurses have been out on strike, held demonstrations and meetings, shows that their concepts of vocation have not prevented them seeing the nature of their exploitation and organizing around it. Secondly because they are all direct employees of the NHS and members of respective unions, they have been in a better position to organise than agency nurses.

The article claims that the wages paid to agency nurses are not in fact much greater than NHS staff, but at about £1.10 an hour they are considerably more, particularly than those at the bottom ends of the salary scale.

However, much agency nurses 'see through' the NHS; they will be less likely to take militant action because their higher short-time earnings mask the real rates of pay for the job.

The agency system takes no account of holidays and sickness and is similar to the Lump which has had such a deleterious effect on the construction industry in so far as many workers are self-employed. Often this means they are not paying tax and have no national insurance protection.

The article fails to examine the source of the opposition among NHS nurses and their unions to the agency system, which is based on a belief that there is no means of controlling the agencies and their effects on the service.

They erode any commitment to the workplace — which would seem to the writers of the article to be synonymous with hierarchy. In fact this means erosion of any real commitment to fellow nurses, and to improving working conditions, and standards of care and facilities.

Several of the nurses quoted in the extracts say that they chop and change jobs. How can women in this position effectively organise when they are here one minute and gone the next? The very mobility of agency staff has always been one of the reasons why employers have been keen to use this kind of labour. Thus the fragmentation of the workforce engendered by the agencies, far from challenging hierarchies — which they never have — renders the situation much more vulnerable to management manipulation. It prevents militancy.

Agency nurses are paid more than other nurses doing exactly the same job, and they are being used to stop up the

gaps in a service creaking under the strain of staff shortages caused by critically low pay and bad conditions. In other words, the employers — of whom there is barely a mention in the article — are happy to pay a tiny number of nurses higher salaries precisely in order to avoid increasing the pay of the majority.

Furthermore, the fact that agency staff may just leave when a doctor or a staff nurse is rude to them could easily mean that they will be less likely to challenge the hierarchy and authoritarianism of the health service. Voting with your feet doesn't challenge the system. (If the Black Women's Group believes it does, they must demonstrate this clearly.)

If agency staffing will radically challenge the health service, it is odd that the Royal College of Nursing, which sees itself as the guardian of professionalism and vocation, should use as a bargaining threat the possibility of instructing its members to quit the NHS and become agency nurses.

It must be asked, who are the agency nurses struggling with? How can they organise? What is their leverage? That women are driven by bad pay and conditions and domestic circumstances to work for the agencies does not make them any the less a contracting-out system.

Here we would criticise the method of your argument. You seem to identify a simple act of refusal as constituting the activity of a political vanguard. An act of refusal, for you, becomes synonymous with organization.

Unlike the article, we think there is nothing intrinsically wrong with having a caring attitude to your work. All workers should have work that they can 'care' about (see Audrey Wise, *Red Rag*). What is wrong is that this concern should be exploited. Fortunately many nurses and hospital staff have realised that precisely in order to care they must fight for better wages and a properly financed national health service. An outstanding example of how this caring attitude has been translated into trade union struggle, which has wide political implications, is the present campaign against the use of NHS facilities and beds for private patients. This is 'caring' at its best. The sort that is at the heart of the struggle for socialism.

While the article accurately described the oppression felt by hospital workers, we felt that this was used quite wrongly to substantiate a political theme which does not express the interests of the mass of nurses, and indeed patients, and which does not contain within it the means of effective organisation to combat hospital hierarchies, the erosion of health service standards of care, and the appallingly bad pay earned by hospital workers.

Red Rag Collective

Black Women's Group replies:

Sir,

We wonder if the Red Rag Collective are conscious of the glaring contradiction between the anti-position they have on agency nurses and the position they claim for themselves as socialist women. The arguments put forward by them are not new for we have heard them over and over again from the DHSS, RCN, NUPE, COHSE and the Left. In fact, in their attacks on agency nurses, the government and these other organisations have found common ground for the assault. Red Rag women do not distinguish themselves.

1. We never implied in our article that 'Agency nurses have a clearer understanding of their exploitation, their wage slave position than nursing and other hospital staff'. We said: 'The agency nurse is the first refusal to be tied to the hospital hierarchy, thereby confronting the blackmail that faces all nurses, that they are 'caring professionals' and not workers'. We were not evaluating their consciousness, we were exposing their hidden struggle, to show what is possible for other hospital workers.

2. Red Rag doesn't see that refusing the NHS is making a struggle. NHS nurses have been helped to struggle against their exploitation by the large numbers of women who have left the Service, and not always to do agency work. If a hospital (or any industry) is understaffed, then those workers that remain are in a better position to make a struggle.

3. Agency nurses get more money than those nurses at the bottom end of the salary scale. Yes, that's true, though not much more. But if a section of the working class has won by any means necessary (with hands or feet) a higher wage scale for itself, they are setting the pace for the others. Men get more money than women, and whites more than blacks, but do Red Rag believe therefore that men and whites should get less? We are not for redistributing poverty.

4. The parallel drawn between agency and Lump workers is very illuminating. The point to be made here is that Lump workers do not have a 'caring attitude' to their work because it has nothing to do with them. Unfortunately they have no control over what they build [yet] but they have at least been able to win for themselves some determination over what hours and in what conditions they will work. What seems to bother Red Rag is that here are two sets of workers who do not conform to the method of struggling that they and the institutions they support have laid down. For Red Rag, every struggle begins with being at work and being a disciplined worker. And what is this pre-occupation with paying taxes — are Red Rag saying they are against workers who refuse to pay back their wage to capital in the form of taxes?

5. The sources of attack on the agency nurse are not the NHS nurses themselves.

Its sources are the Government, the unions and the Left.

6. 'They [Agency nurses] erode any commitment to the work place.' That is precisely the point of our article.

7. The claim that agency nurses fragment the workforce is too simple. As black women our first concern is with the division that has been built into the Health Service between native and overseas nurses. The question is not only how to overcome these divisions, but how to use each of our different situations as a point from which to attack. In our article we said: 'At critical points in struggle, when the interests of two different sets of workers seem to clash, the stronger often win their case by temporarily excluding the weaker . . . Black nurses cannot know if the unity for which white nurses are calling is any guarantee that their specific grievances will be dealt with'. Different groups of workers, each struggling from their own particular situation, and using their own particular tactics, do not weaken each other's struggles but contribute to them.

8. An act of refusal is better than an act of acceptance, and what we were saying is that there is more than one way to refuse, and more than one way to organise. Agency nursing is one.

9. We agree that all workers should have work they care about, but that is quite different from saying they should have a 'caring attitude' to capitalist work. Red Rag is posing as feminists and yet, in insisting that we should 'care' they reinforce the exploitation of women as service workers out of the home and as housewives, i.e. service workers within the home. Red Rag quite clearly believe that women should care about their work, other workers, children — in fact, everything before themselves. As we said: 'No woman is more identified with service work than black women' and, therefore, no woman is refusing service work with as much violence.

If Red Rag can't see the struggle of black women as against caring for themselves and not capitalist work, then they are on the other side.

Next month's BACKLASH will be on 'Which Way Black America'.

Responses should be in by Monday 28 October.

Back To Ethiopia

John La Rose

It would be difficult to imagine now, after the final unceremonious dethronement of the Emperor Haile Selassie by the officers of the Ethiopian army, what a tumultuous reception Haile Selassie received in Jamaica when he paid an official visit there a few years ago. The Rastafarians virtually commandeered the occasion. The welcoming Government leaders lost control. It was only after an appeal by Mortimer Planno, one of the political Rasta leaders, that some order was restored.

The 1930s were a time of recession. The emigrants to the Panama, where they broke their backs to build the Canal, to the sugar cane and banana plantations in Cuba and Costa Rica were driven by necessity back to Jamaica and the other islands. Garveyism, which has risen in splendour to 'up the mighty race' through the militant vision of Garvey and the glorious conventions of the UNIA in the early '20s, was already in decline. Haile Selassie was crowned Emperor in 1930.

For the culturally and economically dispossessed blacks in the Caribbean, Africa and the U.S., Ethiopia had long been a beacon of hope and pride. In some minds it was coupled with Liberia. Until the postwar thrust of the modern mass movements in Africa led by Kwame Nkrumah and George Padmore brought the Gold Coast to independence as Ghana in 1957, these were the only two independent African states. And of the two Ethiopia was pre-eminent.

Those who had not had the chance to read ancient African history, like Garvey, relied on the King James version of the Old Testament. And Garvey's vision of a black movement which would end white oppression in Africa and the world penetrated everywhere. And everywhere this vision was coupled in the imagination with the land of Ethiopia.

Garvey returned to Jamaica on the 10th of January 1927. This was after serving a prison sentence in the U.S. on a charge of defrauding through the mail trumped up by the U.S. administration. The U.S., like the other European imperialist powers, fearful of the threat to their capital, caused the rising tide of mass black anger in motion sought to undermine Garvey's prestige and decapitate the mass movement. They jailed the leader. The masses knew how to judge this tactic. Nothing like that could daunt them. 'Never before had the city of Kingston [Jamaica] witnessed such a demonstration of loyalty and love.' That was how they signalled their defiance.

In the meeting held in Kingston the following night Garvey had this to say among other things: 'The black men of Carthage, the black men of Ethiopia, the black men of Egypt, of Timbuctu and Alexandria — gave the light of civilization to the world.'

And quote the Bible: 'Ethiopia shall

stretch forth her hands unto God and princes shall come forth out of Egypt.'

In the heavy pressure directed by the colonisers at the mind of the colonized, the sufferers, the unemployed and oppressed children of Africans enslaved and torn out of the belly of Africa held to this lamp in the darkness of Babylon. It grounded them for struggle and revolt as other ideas had grounded them in the past.

When Mussolini trampled on Ethiopia in 1935 in the Italo-Abyssinian war, committees in defence of Ethiopia were organised everywhere. 'The history of the Ethiopian people begins with the history of Aksum.'

... Nearly 1,000 years before the rise of the Kingdom of Axum — the direct ancestor of modern Ethiopia — the Horn of African entered into a period of expansion of the higher forms of social organisation. City states already existed there and contributed to the development of Axamite civilisation when Rome had not yet been founded!

Rome grew and thrived on the tribute it received from its colonies and the internal oppression of its plebs and slaves. This Ethiopian civilisation, like all empires in Africa and elsewhere before and since, depended on the centralisation of the feudal state in the hands of rases and nobles and the pitiless exploitation of the serfs and peasants on the land. It's only so Taj Mahals are built so pyramids are constructed.

The Rastafarians rejected the white Babylon of the West but embraced unknowingly the Babylon of Ethiopia. It was this only partially false consciousness that gave them a grip on themselves and recovered their persons for their art, music, literature and religious myths that have had such a powerful influence on the arts in our time, transmuted into its best known form today, the Reggae. But it was the oppression of the West that focussed their real consciousness and will further ground their allegiance,

stripped of inessentials. 'How can these Rastafarians worship Haile Selassie?' an Ethiopian political exile once asked me. These lines will offer some explanation and a certain vindication.

A Provisional Military Council now rules Ethiopia. It is not the first time in Africa that a military elite, handmaiden of the ruling establishment, has contested for power on its own at a moment of social and political difficulty for the traditional rulers. In Ethiopia the famine, a consequence of generations of neglect and oppression, was their signal of doom. They pretended the famine did not exist: the dead and hungry refused to go away.

The workers, students, the unemployed and urban poor have been active in this process of change. Eventually the beggars and city poor proclaimed the once unspeakable slogan: Hang the Emperor! But power still remains in the hands of the military elite. The process is not yet at an end. Significant forces are still contesting for power, though the military appears to have the upper hand.

The Worldwide Federation of Ethiopian Students have now 'accused the members of the council of collaborating with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency'. Only two years ago, in August 1972, *Ramparts*, a U.S. journal published what it called a 'Memoir of U.S. Intelligence'. It was an interview with a disaffected officer of the N.S.A. (National Security Agency) far more deadly though less well-known than the C.I.A. The section of the interview concerning Ethiopia and Africa reads:

Q. What about Africa? Does the N.S.A. have installations there?

A. Yes, one in Ethiopia on the East Coast and in Morocco in the West Coast.

Q. Do they ever gather intelligence on the African insurgents?

A. I went to Africa once for a vacation. I understood that there were the DSUs, that's direct support units, working against Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, those countries. These DSUs are in naval units off the coast. They are tasked with two problems: first they copy the indigenous Portuguese forces and second, they copy the liberation forces.

So there is nothing to rejoice about. Only a time for vigilance and struggle, and ideological clarification.



REVIEWS

motive

MICHEL RAPTIS REVOLUTION & COUNTER REVOLUTION IN CHILE

a dossier on workers'
participation in the
revolutionary process

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Chile.

Michel Raptis

Allison & Busby. London 1974 Paperback £1.50. Hardback £3.50.

Written in March 1973, the first part of Michel Raptis' account of the revolutionary process in Chile during the previous three years, now makes ironic reading, a year after the coup. But when the news from Chile is dominated by the junta's savage repression of the left, it is also the right time to examine the social and political expressions of mass power which sprang from the grass-roots in that period, and which scared the bourgeoisie into bringing down Allende's regime. This is the focus of this important book, which is especially valuable as being based on first-hand observation, and supplemented with documents on workers' participation, from the government, political parties, and the people.

Raptis outlines the previous tradition of anti-imperialist militancy, and the more recent demands for a socialist economy from the working-class. The hollowness of nationalisation and agrarian reform in a capitalist, pro-imperialist context had been revealed by the bourgeoisie Christian Democrat regime from 1965-70, under which workers had already begun spontaneous organisation outside the state and union framework.

Many workers therefore welcomed Allende's Popular Unity coalition as at last being 'their' government. Allende claimed that 'revolutionary transformations . . . can only be carried out if the Chilean people takes governmental power

into its own hands and truly, effectively exercises it' (p. 22). But in practice, 'the people' meant the U.P. party and its state bureaucratic organisations; the official party line closely followed that of the Communist Party, also influential in the unions, of a gradual constitutional road to socialism in alliance with the bourgeoisie.

The plans for workers' participation drawn up by the government and unions virtually amounted to a system of co-management between the representatives of party, unions and workers. Although implemented, the industrial proletariat began to form their own organisations, not only on a factory basis, but also co-ordination by area committees. A similar response from the base took place on the land, where state bodies of peasant participation were supplemented by communal councils. The inhabitants of the shanty towns organised to occupy land for housing, and to run their own committees for education, health, defence, food-distribution and so on. Communal councils responsible to area popular assemblies co-ordinated all these functions.

One of the most significant points that emerges from this account, is the necessary breakdown in popular action of the racial, social, sexual and political divisions, and of the false distinction between producer and consumer, which capitalism normally fosters. The indigenous Mapuche community participated in peasant action; workers, peasants, women, artisans, unemployed, students and youth worked together, as did members of different political groups, from the reformist parties to the extreme left.

Raptis is concerned not only with popular power *per se*, but in its interaction with the political parties including the official government leadership. The analysis of the U.P. may not please some comrades like the writer in last month's *Race Today* who imply that Allende was a conscious tool of capital, rather than a victim of his own contradictions. Raptis argues that the growth of the nationalised 'social property' sector of the economy spurred workers to extend it on their own initiative by land and factory occupations. Allende's 'peaceful' policy for socialism contributed towards an opening for genuine social revolution both through the popularisation of participation, and through the experience gained by the working-class, giving them the confidence to demand more.

The fact that it was the people rather than the party which formed the revolutionary vanguard arose out of class necessity, not only in the historic or ideological sense, but as a means of survival in the face of inflation and shortage intensified by the social and economic sabotage of the Right. The U.P. was forced to follow ratifying 'illegal' occupations, and drawing up legislation and a 1973 election programme calling for 'the building of popular power at the base'.

But trapped in the attempt to destroy bourgeoisie power by its own consent, Allende stopped short of letting the peo-

ple defend what they had won. Calls for vigilance and self defence gave way to the U.P.'s endorsement of police and army disarming and harassment of the popular organisations. Through bringing the army into the government Allende finally used the Right to control the real forces for socialism.

Since Raptis argues that a state of dual power had been reached by 1973, the book is no apologia for Allende, who refused to act on this despite pressure from the Left both inside and outside the U.P. But his misjudgements on the interests and strength of the middle classes are related to basic economic contradictions. Although failing to revolutionise the economy, the U.P. also lost foreign aid and investment, vital to an economy already vulnerable to the manipulation of copper prices and exports by a vindictive international capitalism.

Central to Raptis' analysis is his basic distinction between workers' control mediated by bureaucratic organisations, and the direct management of their social, political and economic life by the workers themselves. 'It is the degree of participation which measures the quality of the revolutionary process and determines the nature of the new system. (p. 14). This contrast between 'state socialism' and 'self-management' is crucial to British politics at the moment with the Labour Left's equation of socialism with nationalisation.

But it is possible that Raptis' standpoint leads him to overemphasise the immediate role of direct participation in Chile. At no time were the majority of the people involved in popular organisations, which on Raptis' own admission were unevenly spread and often badly organised, especially among the peasantry.

Given the general relevance of his account, it is also a pity that Raptis did not suggest more on the specifically economic value of the revolutionary alternative. Both his theoretical presentation of self-management, and speculation in the case of Chile tend to be idealist; economic problems fading away with the 'permanent self-adjustment' of workers' participation. The trap for Chile, as for all the neo-colonial 'Third World', was dependence on foreign capital. Would a substitution of aid from socialist countries solve the problem?

At the other end of the scale, it would have been valuable to have included more material on the daily organisation of the organs of popular power — an inside view of the problems and their resolution. The book comes to life with a young woman's account of her own life and her politicisation through her part in land occupations and communal food distribution. It brings home a main message of the book: that the achievements of those three years lay in the new consciousness created in all sections of the working class, not only the male industrialised proletariat, through their direct participation in the revolutionary struggle.

Hermione Harris

Tanzanian Guidelines

TANU, The Arusha Declaration Third World First. London, 10p.

Tanu, Tanzania: Party Guidelines LIBERATION SUPPORT MOVEMENT, Richmond, Canada 12p.

Both the Arusha Declaration the Guidelines are documents of the Tanganyika African Nationalist Union, the most remarkable political party anywhere, not only in Africa. In addition the name of Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, the country that TANU governs, should provoke great interest.

The document's significance lies in their attempt to face not the abstraction, 'problems of the Third World', but the urgent and concrete problems of people's power in the Third World. In the Arusha Declaration of 1967, the Arusha Resolution dictates the political and organisational principles on which the party is to be run. Point A deals with The Leadership and number 1 in Point A says: 'Every TANU or Government leader must be either a Peasant or a Worker, and should in no way be associated with the practices of Capitalism or Feudalism.'

That is a remarkable statement. If generally applied some 90% of those who are leaders in political parties today, in and out of government, would have to go out. That is the principle on which this party has been built. To be a political leader, you cannot be practising capitalism or running a feudal state. You have to be either a peasant or a worker.



Sometime later, Nyerere presented to the party a report of 10 years of work, from 1961-71. On p. 29 is a remarkable statement as I have read since the death of Lenin. He says: '... although great advances have been made since 1967 in many respects there is one field in which experience have shown that more emphasis is required. We have gradually realised that public ownership of enterprises is not enough.' He continues: 'These enterprises may be — and in most cases in Tanzania have been — managed well, and with the intention of serving the interest of the Tanzanian people.' That

seems good enough. You take it away from the foreign owners, you put Tanzanian people there, and they are running it well and in the interests of the Tanzanian people. And then comes the highly penetrating and significant statement: 'But they are still being managed for the people and only by them in the sense that the decisions are taken by Tanzanians appointed by, and responsible to, an elected government.'

You take it from the capitalists, foreign or local. You put in Tanzanians instead who are representatives of the people. They run it. They run it well. They run it in the interests of the Tanzanian people yet the workers are dissatisfied. They are dissatisfied because *they* are not really managing. It is being managed *for* the people. Some good people are managing but still *the people* are not managing. He goes on to say, 'consequently the people who are not in management position in the public corporation still do not feel that these corporations are theirs. Even the workers in the organisation frequently feel that they are working for "them" and not for themselves.'

Nyerere is able to understand that it is not enough that workers are being managed, even though by Tanzanians, and that they are not satisfied. This is something that is taking place throughout the world. Workers and peasants are no longer satisfied to be managed. The workers in the government corporations still feel there is a distinction between 'them' (those fellows who are up there) and themselves. And that is what we have to look at when we come to the Guidelines.

Nyerere wrote TANU Guidelines to deal with this situation in the only way he could. In Section 15 he writes: 'There must be a deliberate effort to build equality between the leaders and those they lead. For a Tanzanian leader it must be forbidden to be arrogant, extravagant, contemptuous and oppressive. The Tanzanian leader has to be a person who respects people, scorns ostentation and who is not a tyrant. He should epitomise heroism, bravery, and be a champion of justice and equality.'

Some workers, whether or not they can read, take Section 15 into the factory, point to various leaders and say, 'he is arrogant', or 'he is extravagant' or 'he is contemptuous' or 'he does not respect the people'. 'We want him out.' There are cases where workers using Section 15 have put out certain of the leaders. Nyerere writes this public document and workers are using it. To arm workers with words against their managers is unusual anywhere in the world, not only in Africa. Why does Nyerere do it? We can only sketch the reasons here.

The economy of Tanzania in isolation is not developed enough to be the basis of real workers' power. Nyerere is tackling the problem of how to use the power that workers and peasants do have to stave off the bureaucratic and totalitarian state which has befallen other Third World countries whose technology is underdeveloped. It is this that makes the Guidelines and indeed everything that is coming

out of Tanzania vital and exciting.

C.L.R. James

This review, reprinted from Falling Wall Press, and a copy of the Tanzanian Guidelines, are available from Falling Wall Press, 79 Richmond Rd, Bristol BS6 5EP.

The Police Revolution

Peter Evans

George Allen & Unwin. £3.60.

This book is on the level of simple Simon met a pieman. The police have terrible problems. They are a tribe — they are isolated — but are really very nice.

It is such a pity that they have to clash with black people — of course they are very nice too. They are isolated and socially deprived. And we ought to do something about that. But actually they are very similar to the police. They are both isolated minorities. So they should get together and understand each other, and then it would be a nice world and we could all live together happily ever after.

Bollocks! This book describes a fantasy world and is not worth reading.

Ian MacDonald

A Race Today Seminar on Racism

19th, 20th & 23rd October 1974

Organised by Hull Overseas Student Society.

Speakers from:

Imperial Typewriters Strike Committee

Race Today

African Liberation Movement

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AFRICA CENTRE

Coming events:

Wed., 6 November, 'British Community in South Africa'. Speakers include Mr. C.B.B. Beauman, Adam Raphael, A.I. McDonald, L. Duncan. 50p. 6.30 pm.

Tuesday, 12 November, 'Psychological Development in Africa', Talk by Dr. J.M. Fie. 6.30 pm. 40p.

Wed., 20 November, 'Child Fostering by Africans in London'. Speakers include Pat Stapleton. Workshops. 6-10 pm.

Last week in November — don't forget Africa Week — 10th anniversary festivities.

For further information, contact Margy at the Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2, 01-836 1973.

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OCTOBER 27 National Mobilization on Ireland Demand: British Troops out of Ireland Self determination for Irish people as a whole SMASH British Imperialism in Ireland Rally at Clerkenwell Green, London, EC1 at 2 p.m. Sunday October 27. March to Fleet Street and Downing Street.

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HELP THE BANGLADESH FLOOD VICTIMS

The Manchester Bangladesh Flood Committee is appealing for donations from any individuals, organisations, students or Trade Unions and church bodies. In addition, it is organising a series of benefit discos, variety plays, discussions etc. They also provide speakers on the flood situation in Bangladesh. The Committee's main aim is to try and open channels free of corruption through which money and goods can be sent from Manchester to the Bangladesh people.

For further information contact: Osman Zamal, 100 Bellevue Road, Leeds. James Rees, 45 Aspinall Street, Rusholme, Manchester (224-8292) or A. Ahmed, 15 Convent Walk, Sheffield. (24134).

A Race Today Forum on Racism

24th, 25th and 26th October

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The Revolutionary movement in India
The black women's group
Race Today Collective and others

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For further information contact Race Today Society, c/o Leeds University, University Road, Leeds, LS2 9JT. Or Race Today, 74 Shakespeare Rd, London SE24.

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RACE AND RESISTANCE: The IRR Story A. Sivanandan

Too many of us are paralysed by our histories to want to change them. In the result we perpetuate the power of those who make our histories - to make ourselves even more helpless.

When that 'we' refers to those of us in institutions and academics of higher learning given to the study of social reality, our refusal to change that reality makes us collaborators in the subjugation of the powerless by bringing credibility to power.

This introduction opens the new pamphlet, published by Race Today Publications, which presents an analysis of the politics of the Institute's history, and through it, the politics of race and imperialism in our time.

Available from Race Today, 74 Shakespeare Rd, London SE24 at 30p. Tel: 01-737 2268.

Other publications in the pipeline for this year:

THE BLACK EXPLOSION IN SCHOOLS by Farrukh Dhondy

SEX, RACE AND WORKING CLASS POWER by Selma James

POLICE AND THE WAGELESS by Darcus Howe

Race Today

December 1974 20p

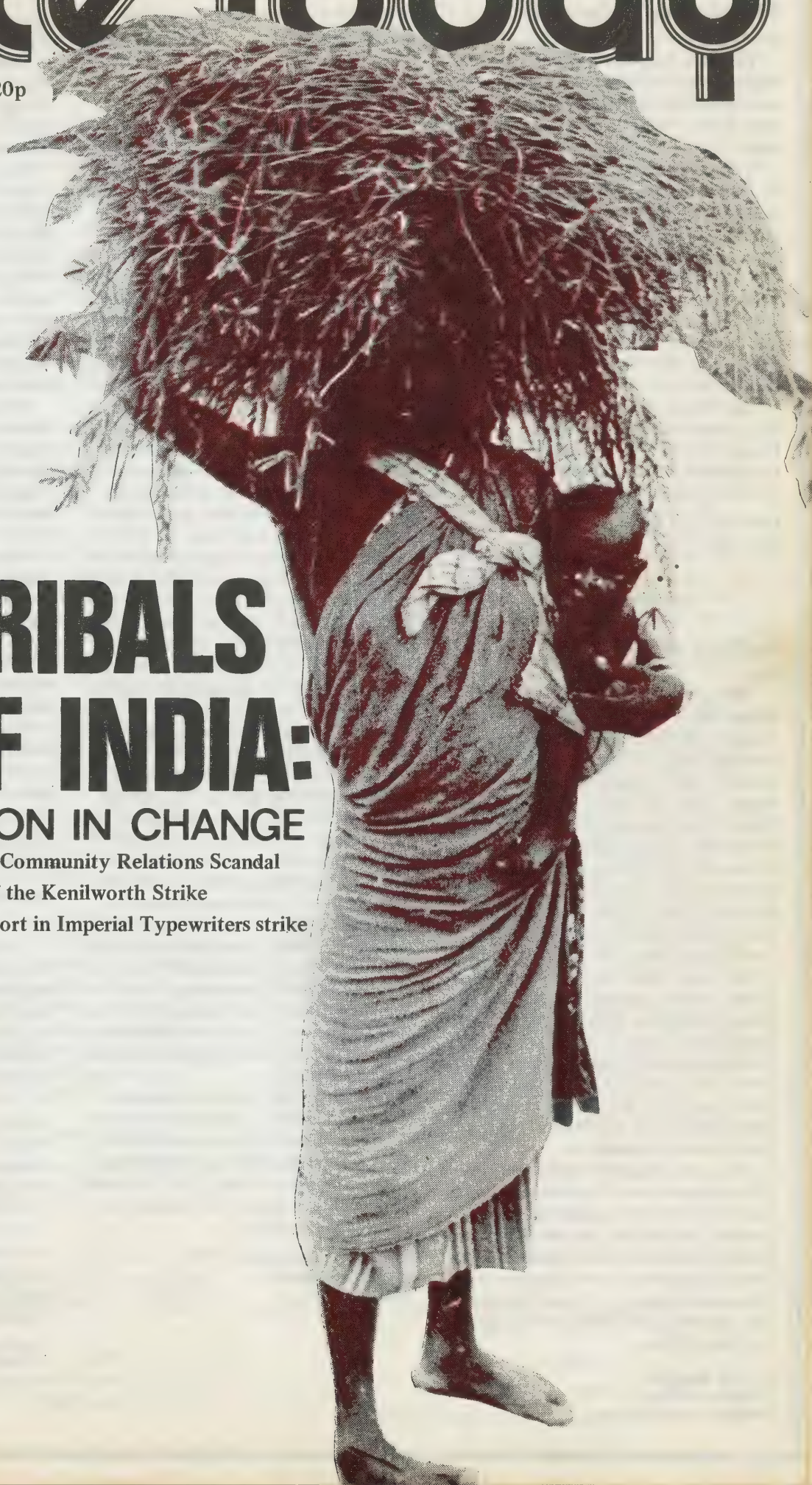
THE TRIBALS OF INDIA:

A NATION IN CHANGE

Islington Community Relations Scandal

Defeat of the Kenilworth Strike

T&G Report in Imperial Typewriters strike



LETTERS

Dissent within the Services

Race Today,

Though it is against the policy of the British Government to allow servicemen to express their political views publicly, there is also a limit on how much one is going to allow themselves to be muzzled.

We have no doubt that we are typical of the growing number of black and anti-racist servicemen who were recently put in a disgusting and embarrassing position, referring of course to the recent RN visit to South Africa.

We wish to say that though our present position is somewhat precarious, in no way do we support or condone the hypocritical actions of the British Government towards South Africa.

The eventual consequences of perpetuating racist policies and using the Armed Forces to do so will serve merely to kindle the flames of an already prevalent feeling of dissent within the Services.

Chris Byrne and Dennis Osborne,
HM Forces.

Justice in West Bengal

Sir,

The Law and Order situation in West Bengal has been bad for over fifty years. Amnesty International have rightly shown that the holding of persons without trial is unjust but is being practised in West Bengal under the Defence of India Rules. This is a practice inherited from the former British India Government. The Courts in West Bengal are slow and often inept, so that on one occasion that I can remember, the *Calcutta Statesman* considered that it was no longer possible to be in contempt of them. Reform of the Courts as with many other things in West Bengal, is long overdue. Reform is costly and West Bengal in common with the rest of India is desperately poor. It is cheaper to lock up trouble-makers than to reform the legal system. This does not justify such behaviour in my view, but it does explain it. Justice should not be a luxury, but in poor countries it usually is.

The letter from Miss Sunita Sen contains a curious error. The Headquarters of the Calcutta Police is called Lalbazaar, meaning Red Market, and not Tal Bazaar. A Tal is a type of tree, and there are no trees in that place, but the Headquarters are painted a deep red. I hope that the other details in the letter are more accurate than this one.

Peter M. Hawkins
1, Barkerend Road,
Bradford. West Yorkshire.

Note: The error was ours and not the authors. Ed.

Police assault — again

Sir,

I am writing to draw your attention to an assault case with unusual features which will be heard at Ealing Magistrates Court on Tuesday 15th October 1974. A full day has been allotted for the hearing, which will take place in a special court. Mr. Ikram J. Sheikh, a well-known Pakistani business man and past Chairman of the Watford Muslim Association is charged with assaulting P.C. Malcolm Trudgeon, a member of the Southall police. Mr. Tom Kellock, Q.C. is appearing for the defence, and it is understood that the prosecution will be conducted by the legal department of Scotland Yard.

Mr. Sheikh, a data processing consultant and owner of a travel agency in Oxford Street, London, had gone with his wife, two teenage children, sister (Dr. N. Sheikh, a medical practitioner) and brother-in-law to the late night cinema show at the Liberty Cinema, Southall. On leaving the cinema early in the morning of Sunday July 28th 1974, he found a ticket on his car requesting him to call at the police station to answer for an alleged parking offence. He immediately went to the Southall police station and after discussing the alleged offence with the desk sergeant, Sergeant Todd, left the Police Station. Two police vehicles stopped his car as he was driving along the Uxbridge Road. Mr. Sheikh was arrested for drunken driving, his car taken to the police station, and his family left by the roadside. The breathalyser test he took at the police station proved negative, and the later analysed blood sample showed zero alcohol. Mr. Sheikh then made an official complaint of assault against the three police officers who arrested him. As Mr. Sheikh was leaving the Southall police station for a second time he was detained, put in a cell, and later charged with assaulting P.C. Trudgeon.

Mr. Sheikh had previously made an official complaint to the Home Secretary about the conduct of two plain-clothes officers from Southall who searched his business premises in May 1974. The result of the police investigation of that complaint is still awaited.

John Parfitt, B.A., A.L.A.
51, Mildred Avenue,
Watford, Herts.

Women in the Wheatsheaf

Dear Race Today,

After reading 'No Tavern Time for Blacks' in November's *Race Today*, I thought you may be interested in a similar incident which happened to a group of women.

On 15 October, after a meeting about wages for housework, about 20 women went to a nearby pub, the Wheatsheaf in South Lambeth Road. We bought drinks and sat talking quietly amongst ourselves. When we went for a second round the landlord refused to serve us and shouted at us, 'now get out of here'. A woman clearing up glasses told us that he didn't like groups of women together without men because we were 'too strong'.

The fact that some of the group were black no doubt incensed him more. The landlord was very drunk and extremely abusive and threatening. Amongst other things he said, 'I don't want this turned into a Lesbian shop and I don't intend it to be.'

We decided to stay where we were and contacted the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror*. It was reported in both papers the next day, but we got no reaction from other people drinking in the pub.

It's obvious that the increasing confidence and strength of women organising autonomously from men is being felt — even when it is seen in an informal social situation, and is seen as a threat to male power. This is just one incident among many — and presumably they will occur more often as our power increases.

Anne Neale
Power of Women Collective

Cadbury's and Cacao

Sir,

As one who has worked for 25 years in the cacao belts of Nigeria and Ghana, and read William Cadbury's and H.W. Nevins's first-hand accounts of 'slave' cacao, I protest with all my heart at the current 'Black Minstrel' advert being televised for Cadbury.

In the 1930's, cacao labourers in the Agege area of Lagos Colony got an average wage of £7 a year. In the late '60's, cacao farmers in the Agona Swedru area of Central Ghana were averaging about five cedis, say £2-10s, monthly.

If Cadbury are still not ashamed to profit by this poverty without doing any more than they have done for the last 70 years to fight it, at least they might refrain from adding this sort of insult to injury.

Ken Forge
14 Thornton Road,
Bromley, Kent.

EDITORIAL

Sir Keith and the Class

Among other things, Sir Keith Joseph's speech to the Conservative Association in Birmingham on 19 October 1974, indicates an inevitable shift in the concerns of the coordinators of capital. His bid for the intellectual and titular leadership of the Tories represents the fielding of a new Goliath to challenge a powerful David, taking the focus away, for the moment, from the massed Israelites of the unionised shop-floors. We need, he says, not only good behaviour and wage restraint from those in the unions, but more fundamentally a social structure of morality and stability within which the productive and exploitive machinery of capital can work. Without such a stable, moral order, he adds, this country, possibly the world, will pass into the hands of those whom the Tory party is in business to oppose.

Far from making a clumsy blunder, Sir Keith is taking into account, with calculated coherence, the power and potential of the attitudes and actions of the *whole* working class, all those sections and groups, waged and wageless, who contribute to the process of profit. It is significant that Joseph concentrates his fire on those families who fail to train the hearts and minds of new generations into a productive partnership with their exploiters, and on those school teachers who are dedicated to social equality, democracy, the inculcation of critical attitudes and even to the proposition that schoolpupils do have power and use it constructively.

Like Enoch Powell, Joseph makes every word count, and we are bound to count their significance as the organised, if somewhat hysterical reaction to the actions and attitudes that are threatening the world of such as them. In his pronouncements is an awareness that we have championed — that the surplus value that is the life blood of a capitalist society and process is made not merely by those workers who are stopped and searched at the factory gates to ensure that they are not sneaking away with the goods they have assembled, but by mothers and teachers, service industry workers, by the institutions that man, train and reproduce the muscle and mind of the whole class.

The recent history of the world gives us the clearest extension of these contentions outside the borders of Joseph's sceptred isle. As we have repeatedly pointed out, the blacks of Mozambique, though living and working in a relatively underdeveloped part of a world which capital has integrated, were able to bring about, in partnership with the workers of Portugal, the most significant political change in Europe for decades. Vietnam moves America, not by paying fees to the same union, but by fighting the direct exploitation and extermination that threatens it.

To state this is not merely to state the obvious: it is to

demolish, once and for all, the several romantic heresies that bedevil and weaken the unity of the differently placed sections of the working class. In this context the most instrumental definition of 'racism' is the destruction of this unity along the lines of colour. Who then are the offenders? Not only Enoch and Joseph, whose racism and sexism are becoming proverbs, but other self-appointed prophets who deny and attempt to destroy the modes and the potentials of the autonomous struggle of black workers and women workers in the factories, communities, on the streets and in the homes. Of these makers of speeches and articulators of ideology some must be branded as malicious, others as misled or mistaken, all as destroyers of the struggle of the working class.

Within the struggle of the black worker of Britain the heresies begin to ossify. On the one hand we have what is loosely known as the 'white left' who define 'racism' psychologically and proceed into combat with no understanding or acceptance of the way in which black sections of the working class set out to consolidate their own power against capital. On the other there are those 'immigrant' organisations who focus their attention on the ideological niceties and splits amongst the left-wing parties 'back home'. The division of the Indian Worker's Association into the pro-Marxist and pro-Marxist-Leninist Communist Parties of India is one such. While they act as useful propagandists of the state of the parties and their positions in the struggle within India, this political misorientation forces them into an incapacity to be effective instruments in the hands of the Asian and black workers of Britain. As we said in past issues, their role in the Imperial workers' struggle or in Mansfield Hosiery Mills was retrogressive.

On Saturday, 26 October, when white workers on the buses in Leeds came out on strike to protest against the victory that Sikhs had won against the management's refusal to let them wear turbans while driving buses, the IWA who had been in on the protest was thrown into strategic *disarray*. The white workers were merely supporting an earlier ballot of their union (TGWU) which came out against the Sikhs and their turbans. While on the one hand sticking to the dogma of 'working within the unions against the bureaucracy', the IWA was forced to call on the union to swallow its racism. It is not the white workers who can swallow the differential of wage and power they have over black workers. Black workers don't behave as though they want to make them swallow anything.

Our fight is against the capital that forces these differentials, and against those organisations that help to enshrine or disguise them. Even if these sections of the broad left do not recognise the potentials, modes and autonomous forms of this struggle, Keith Joseph has approached, with some mystification, the threat these struggles pose to the rule of capitalist institutions in Britain.

This issue was edited by Leila Hassan.

Vol. 6 Number 12 December 1974

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Archbishop Temple's School, once a relatively small Church of England Comprehensive, has recently amalgamated with another such Comprehensive and is now known as Archbishop Michael Ramsey (AMR). The school now has a population of 1,100 pupils and operates on four different sites, one of which is at Camberwell. The other three are situated in the vicinity of North Lambeth.

For some time now, members of the fifth year at Archbishop Michael Ramsey's have been discontented with their lot. Only last term, as fourth years, they grumbled and cursed – as did the previous fifth year – about having been compelled to remain at school for an extra year. A few, finding complaint futile, unofficially left school and sought employment. Those who remained found themselves isolated from all other years in a 'grotesque' building in Lambeth Road. It has been condemned since the beginning of the 20th century. All the classrooms are situated on the ground floor and none of them are soundproof. There are no adequate facilities; no lavatories, no library, no music rooms, no science labs, apart from which two classrooms are rendered useless when it rains since the roofs leak. At the beginning of this term when they first arrived at the building some attempts were made by teachers and pupils to add colour to classrooms with posters. These failing, the pupils have declared it 'an incorrigible pigsty'.

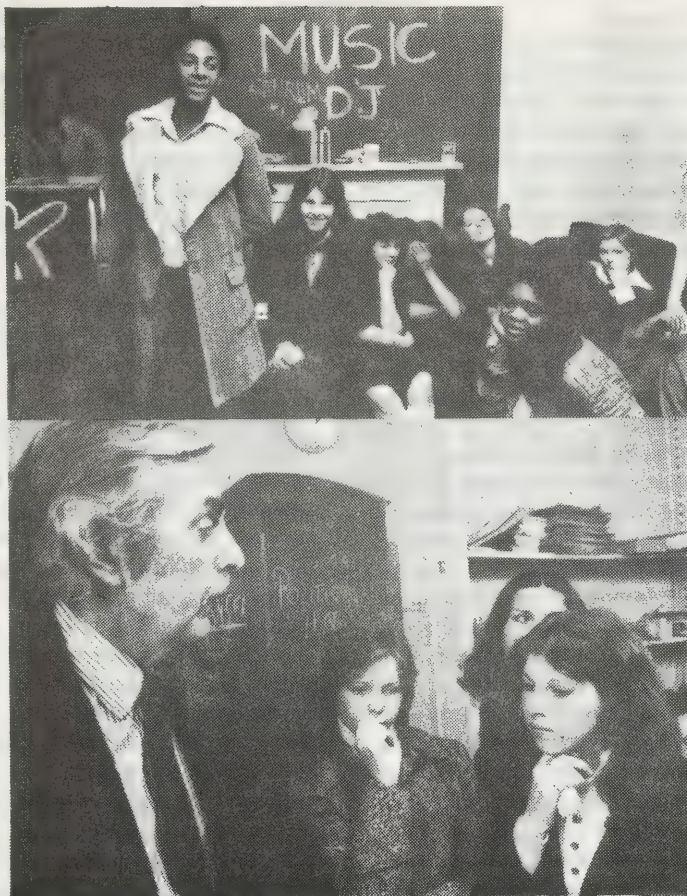
Despite the lack of facilities, the pupils, since the beginning of the autumn term, have managed to set up their own disco in the school, which bears close resemblance to the clubs which they attend. In addition, two fifth years have provided a service for the rest by setting up a coffee 'shop'. They sold coffee and rolls and made about £1.28 profit per day. All this has been liberally tolerated by the hierarchy of the school.

Promises of a place in the new school at Camberwell Road had been made to them as some sort of consolation for their plight, but this failed to materialise, and they doubted if they were going to be transferred at all.

Dissatisfaction progressed to indignation. A Committee with a view to tackling the problem was formed by fifth formers and, availing itself of the necessary school equipment, produced a leaflet declaring their intentions and purpose. On Wednesday, 9 October, a strike was planned for the following day – Election day. One of the girls involved describes the strike:

Well, it all started when seven of the boys formed a committee and put out a leaflet saying that we were going on strike. They wanted a few girls on the committee, but they left it till the morning of the strike. I went and told them that the press had been phoned and

PUPILS TAKE OVER



Associated Press

they asked me if I wanted to join the committee. I said I would, and they asked me if I could think of any other girls who might like to join. A friend of mine wanted to and so she did.

We were worried about taking our exams in that building, and the other thing was that Mr. Aggett wanted to stop our disco. Also, he wanted to change the members of the committee, and the majority of us didn't want this.

On Thursday, everybody was getting excited, saying 'we're going to have a strike'. Everybody went into the hall and sat down, refusing to leave. We used the staff telephone and phoned ITV, London Broadcasting and Capitol Radio. At 10.45 am the press and television arrived, and they began to take photographs of the school and interview us – we needed the publicity more than anything. At 11.30 we telephoned the police and told them of our decision to march to AMR. Whilst waiting for them to arrive we made placards which said 'We want a school, not a pigsty', and 'We are kids, not pigs'.

On our way there we passed the fourth years' building at Lambeth Road and some pupils came out to support us. We occupied

the fifth year room at AMR and a teacher came and told us that Mr. Aggett wanted to speak to us. We told him that we wanted to discuss it amongst ourselves first. At about 12.30 Mr. Aggett arrived and we asked him some questions, but he wouldn't give us straight answers to them. He said that the sixth formers were worse off than us, and since they were working for examinations they had to be seen to first.

Then he told us that we could go downstairs and have a free meal, so we did. He must have known that we were coming since he had all those meals prepared. After dinner we went back upstairs to the fifth form room, and Mr. Aggett told us that we could all go home, except for the committee who he wanted to have another discussion with. Later we went back to Lambeth Road and decided that we would stay the night. One of the boys had brought his own padlock and so we changed the lock. At seven that evening, we went back to the building with food and stuff and discussed what to do next. At 12 we began to work hard, producing more leaflets and some poetry. We didn't get to sleep till 3 or 4 in the morning.

At 7 the next morning, one of the caretakers arrived and tried to break the lock. He couldn't, so he left. At 8 a teacher arrived and so did some of the kids. We let the kids in through the window and telephoned the press. A caretaker and a teacher broke a window and got in, and opened the gates at the front, and let everyone in. The caretaker kicked us down the stairs; we have bruises to show.

On Friday afternoon we had another meeting at AMR with Mr. Aggett where we talked for two hours. On Sunday night some boys got in the school and printed more leaflets at Lambeth Road. On the following Monday, the school at Lambeth Road was locked up. We went and got the fourth years and went over to AMR. We sat down in the hall and a teacher came up to us and said: 'Alright, you've won your case. You're going to be transferred after half-term.' So we thanked the fourth years for supporting us and asked them to return to school.

Most of the parents supported our actions and agreed to come out and join us on a demonstration. Also many of them telephoned Mr. Aggett, enquiring about the state of affairs and asking what he was going to do about it. In addition, members of Kidbrooke School contacted us and wished us 'every success in our endeavours'!

One of the leaflets drawn up by the committee was entitled 'Our Proposals For The Future', in which four demands were made in point form, these being: (1) the fifth year to be moved into Archbishop Michael Ramsey straight away; (2) to have more power in the matters of the new school for all years; (3) to have voluntary lessons above the fourth year (but students must be on the school premises during school hours); (4) for the students in the fifth and sixth years to be given a basic allowance each month to make them more independent of their parents.

We specifically discussed the fourth proposal since it posed certain organisational problems. 'We need this basic allowance', she said, 'mainly for going to clubs and the pictures, and also to buy clothes and for the underground and bus fares just so we don't have to be so dependent on our parents. I think that our parents would support us since that would make things a lot easier for them as well.' I asked her how she thought they could organise for this demand. 'Well, first we've got to get the word 'round to other schools so that everybody knows about it; then we'll find our way from there. I'm sure everybody will strike for that demand, since money is a thing we all need: you can't live on this earth [or at least in this country] without money.'

(continued on page 319)

BISCUIT FACTORY STRIKE

We work at McVitie's factory at Harlesden (London). On Monday, 14 October, we held a one day stoppage as a sign of warning to the company in demand for negotiations to commence, with the union, for a new wage increase. The company had fixed the 12 November (National Budget Day) for the negotiations to commence, a date which is only convenient to the company as by that date their Christmas orders would have been placed. In order to avoid industrial dispute, the company offered a compromise payment of £1.50 per week, but this was turned down by the union officials, after its members had voted against its acceptance. This would have been considered a settlement and the company would make enormous profits. We would still be receiving a pittance, having to work overtime every day to be able to get a higher wage. For these reasons we decided we wanted the negotiations to be brought forward as soon as possible.

The one day stoppage was a success; only 9 workers out of 1,500 workers dared to risk the picket line to go into the factory.

We also got support from o-

ther branches of workers, such as the chargehands, supervisors and computer personnel who in solidarity, did not turn up for work. Some office workers said that we should have consulted them for some were willing to support us in our struggle. The engineering trades (fitters, electricians, etc.) who had just achieved a £5 increase through their union, the AUEW, supported us in a solidarity act at lunch-time by not taking meals at the factory canteen and by booing the managers who entered to take their meals at the canteen.

The majority of us, workers at Harlesden, feel strongly about the union because of their lack of interest, especially that of our convenor. We think that he is being used by the company and, that he is rather inclined towards management's side. This has generated discontent among the workers, mainly among night workers, who are organising collection of signatures stating that the union is not actively engaged in the interests of workers and allowing the exploitation of factory workers to go by unchallenged.

McVitie's factory workers

T & G REPORT BACKS STRIKERS

The long-awaited report of the enquiry carried by Brian Mathers, the regional T&GWU officer, into the strike at Imperial Typewriters has been issued. It's a cool and careful document which manages a neat balancing act between preserving the reputations and power of the old order in Leicester and acknowledging the case made out by the strike committee.

After a dispassionate 2,500 word summary of the dispute, discussed very carefully within a trade union context (and thus ignoring much of the social content of the particular strike; Mather, for example, comments that none of the workers complained about racial discrimination, and that, anyway, is the province of the Race Relations' Board's investigation), the Report makes three sets of recommendations:

(i) an improvement in communications so that all members understand rules and agreements. Copies to be made available in immigrant languages; (ii) that discussions should take place with the company on implementing the National Agreement on bonus

schemes so that retiming does not take place once a worker has got a job above the agreed norm; (iii) a re-examination of the controversial two years' rule so that shop stewards, in good financial standing, who represent the interests of the workers would be able to stand for election in the normal way.

It is essentially a holding document, a sign of the debate going on within the T&G about racism in the union. Although it is too tactful to say so outright, it is a vindication of the strikers' position, a polite rap on the knuckles for the local T&G establishment.

Certainly the strike committee claim it as a great victory. Although the cost of the strike to the Asian workers was tremendous - many of them are now working a second job to pay off debts incurred during the struggle - morale within the factory is high. The strike committee still meet on an irregular basis and, using the report's recommendations to continue the struggle for higher wages and equality of opportunity within the factory.



Peter Harrap (Report)

Pickets at Tulse Hill School. They demanded the immediate sacking of maths teacher Richard Edmonds, a member of the National Front. The ILEA still argue that Edmonds should be free to his views.

STUDENTS SUPPORT RODNEY

Students at the University of Guyana have started a boycott of classes in protest at the decision of the Board of Governors not to appoint Dr. Walter Rodney (see *Race Today*, October and November 1974).

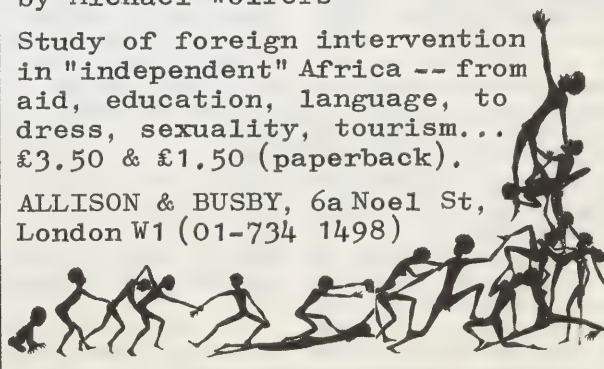
The decision to stage the boycott was taken at a meeting in the University which Dr. Rodney addressed, together with officials of a newly formed Committee for the Defence of the University. During the meeting Dr. Rodney declared that the Guyanese Government had a duty to disclose the reasons for its refusal to appoint him. This refusal, he stressed, was not an attack against an individual, but an attack against the nation. Former lecturer, S.M. Insanally, who was himself sacked from the University staff, also addressed the meeting. He proposed that all members of the staff should resign and that students should withdraw in protest. He also suggested a boycott of this year's graduation ceremony.

The boycott started as classes re-assembled for the Christmas term, and those students who were not in favour were forced to leave their lecture rooms as hostile students turned off lights and overturned tables in their determination to implement the decision.

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POLICE VS. YOUTH 10 ON AFFRAY CHARGES

'Hey you black beauties. Do your thing and be peaceful when leaving this club.' Up on the wall of the Carib club next to the mural of U'roy, this painted slogan seems ironic in the light of events there early in the morning of October 12.

The club occupies two floors above Burton's, the tailors in North London's Cricklewood Broadway. Up a long flight of concrete stairs there is a small box office leading into a shabby club room. On the next floor up there is a dance floor with banks of speakers all round the walls; a place that is representative of where black youths go to entertain themselves. On a good Friday night, three or four hundred would be there. The customers aren't coming now and they say it's going to take awhile to build the club up again.

At two o'clock in the morning of 12 October, a battle broke out at the club between police and black youths which resulted in 40 arrests, a policeman with stab wounds and a head injury, uncounted numbers of injured black youths and ten people up on affray charges.

What happened was perfectly clear to *Evening Standard* reporter Kevin Murphy: the story was given front-page prominence — 'Twelve policemen were wounded — four of them seriously — in a bloody two-hour battle with screaming defiance at more than 70 policemen who laid siege to the building'. And in a story which was almost entirely written from the police point of view, the only outside witness was one nameless 'coloured youth' who 'admitted wielding a bottle'.

The reality, of course, was different. The Carib Club had never had any complaints from neighbours. It had for years been granted a licence by the local authority without objection at the annual hearing. Yet on four separate occasions in the fortnight prior to the battle, police had visited the club on the pretext of looking for wanted persons.

On the night in question, runs the police version, four policemen entered the club at two in the morning, claiming to be chasing after a suspect who had stolen a Lotus Cortina in Harlesden. The youth is then alleged to have run into the club and hidden in the toilets on the second floor. Police claim they chased in after him and were removing him peaceably when, for some reason, a fight broke out. Taking cover in the toilet, they radioed for help and within ten minutes police were arriving from all over North London.

Witnesses on the second floor tell a different tale. They say that a dozen police appeared at the door of the dance floor, did not attempt to look through the dancers (which would have been the most obvious place to search for the youth) but instead went straight to the toilet and dragged someone out. It was at this stage that the rest of the dancers started resisting. Most of the police went downstairs and three policemen retreated into the toilet and radioed for help.

When the 'help' did come, it was much in the nature of a punitive expedition. A white worker who lives behind the club recalled coming home from a party and seeing Cricklewood Broadway blocked off to the public by police. At first reluctant to believe that he did really live behind the Carib Club, the police insisted on walking him to his door and making sure he went inside. But he came back onto his balcony and watched the fighting going on below. A long-standing political activist, he nonetheless describes himself as 'petrified at the action of the police'. In Cricklewood Broadway alone he counted 120 men, rather more than the police claim of 70. 26 cars were involved, along with eight vans and transits, three dog vans and an ambulance on standby.

For half an hour he watched the battle. The police seemed to be organised into small groups outside the club. As black people

came out into the street groups of police would chase after them, shouting vicious obscenities like 'chase after that black cunt'. The dogs were encouraged to nip at the heels of people running down the street. Many policemen had their truncheons out, and two were carrying grey plastic riot shields with a clear visor set into them.

While these squads were at work outside, witnesses in the club describe the battle on the dance floor with youths defending themselves as best they could and police pitching in with anything to hand. The survivors were then made to run the gauntlet of police officers lined down the sides of the long flight of concrete steps leading to the street.

By the time it was all over, 42 youths were detained in Golders Green police station and parents were brought in from home to fetch their children. Ten youths are on affray charges and the first hearing at the Magistrates Court remanded the case until December 13 at Hendon Magis-

black community are organising support for the ten who are on affray charges. A defence committee has been set up after a meeting at the Metro Club (a place where black youth frequent that also had confrontation with the police). With support from a number of West Indian organisations. All the youths are legally represented.

Chief Superintendent Michael Keene, who did not get to the scene until it was all over, has now taken charge of enquiries. 'The policemen defended themselves against very violent attack. Nobody has complained to me of any police brutality', he told Kevin Murphy. 'It is terribly unfortunate — it blew up out of all proportion.' There have been too many similar incidents of mass raids by police on black clubs in the past to view the pattern as a series of unfortunate responses. Rather, they look more and more like the punitive expedition sent out from time to time by the colonial governor to quieten rebellious sections of the natives.

Evening Standard

London: Saturday October 12 1971

LONDON
LATEST

42 held after two-hour battle

TWELVE POLICE WOUNDED IN CLUB SIEGE

By KEVIN MURPHY
TWELVE policemen were wounded — four of them seriously — in a bloody two-hour battle with screaming, bottle-waving coloured youths at a North-West London club early today.

Pc Richard Dixon, in his early twenties and married, was stabbed in the back, had to have 20 stitches in a head wound and was kicked in the neck.

Pc Christopher Beever also in his early twenties, a known police dog in the force, had to have several stitches in the wrist. He is in Whiston General Hospital.

Pc Robert Colquhoun, another officer in his late thirties, was injured in the leg and arm.

The fourth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The fifth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The sixth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The seventh policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The eighth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The ninth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The tenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The eleventh policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The twelfth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The thirteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The fourteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The fifteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

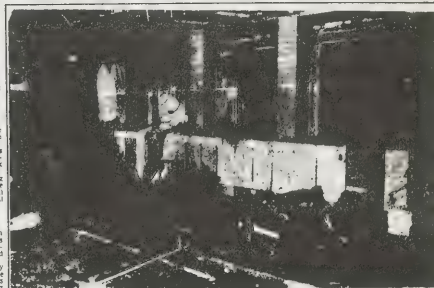
The sixteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The seventeenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The eighteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The nineteenth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.

The twentieth policeman injured was Pc John Smith, who was injured in the leg and arm.



New bomb warning in London

INSIDE YOUR STANDARD
Envoy warns on reflection
London's tough League Cup draw

Tory dilemma over Heath
Chelsea pick their man

Work to rule halts flights
Weekend-8 begins Page 9

I gave away \$711,000—Rocky
Gardening

Player edges ahead in golf
31 and Radio

Charles—in the line of duty
Jonathan Smith

Police

trates Court. In the meantime, the police have taken the membership book and are going round to people's houses to see them as possible witnesses. They also have the club under constant surveillance, continue to harass customers going in and out and are generally making themselves unpleasant. Like the Brockwell Park Three, witnesses are refusing to come forward for fear of these police tactics.

At present sections of the

Donations to the Cricklewood Ten Defence Committee. The Carib Club, above Burtons, Cricklewood, Broadway, London N.W.2.

(continued from page 316)

Quite clearly, what has happened at ARM is a new form of struggle in the continuous series of student action which has occurred over the past few years: 'new' because those who were involved conducted a sustained strike for something which the State had to provide more resources for (all previous strikes have concerned themselves with discipline, uniform etc.), and because none of these students have any allegiance to any organised structure — for example, the National Union of School Children or the Black Students Action Committee. Thus it can be said that their actions were completely autonomous. (Lambeth N.U.T. declared this year as one of 'assault on union bureaucracy (as are teachers) the pupils were able to win their demand almost immediately. Unconsciously, they were bypassing the N.U.T. structure, which had promised to sort out working conditions in school for them. In conducting such a struggle, not only have the fifth formers shown a new direction for students, but for unionised teachers, too.

A sixth former

R.R.B. FAILS AGAIN

Mr. Din is an Asian worker employed by Fleet Deliveries, a subsidiary of International Publications Corporation. He went to work there in 1971 as a motor mechanic and was the only black person employed there. Soon he found that he was given all the heavy and dirty jobs — extra work for which he was not employed or paid. The white workers who were paid to do the work refused. Mr. Din complained to his fellow workmates, union and management, but no one took any notice.

He got so fed up that he decided to complain to the Race Relations Board. 'I had no other black workers to back me up — and I didn't know what else to do.' He went to the Board on 29 August and explained his case which was so obviously one of discrimination. They listened and told him it would be considered by the North Metropolitan Conciliation Committee. On 6 September they wrote, telling him that in light of information obtained they had formed the opinion that no lawful discrimination had occurred. Apart from this, and because of the way they approached management — he finds that life is worse for him at work — and he is still doing dirty jobs.

TURBANS, SPEARS & TOILETS CONT.

Gian Singh Rayat and Kewal Singh Rehal are still out of work. The two Sikh bus drivers from the Chapeltown area of Leeds have been suspended from work for four months, since they both 'broke uniform regulations' by wearing their turbans for work (see November *Race Today*).

Following the intensive public activity by the Indian Workers Association and Indian students in September, it was agreed to allow 'behind the scenes' negotiations to go on under the expert guidance of Dr. Fletcher, the Senior Community Relations Officer. On 25 October these negotiations bore fruit when a ballot of Leeds busmen showed that a majority favoured new uniform regulations which would allow the Sikhs to wear their turbans.

The jubilation which greeted the decision was short lived. On the following day thousands of Leeds shoppers found themselves stranded as the busmen went on unofficial strike. They said that their union (T&GWU) had deceived them. They thought they were simply voting for uniform changes such as not having to wear ties in hot weather. They were still adamantly opposed to the Sikhs wearing their turbans. When Rayat and Rehal arrived at work on Monday, the 28th, they were sent home and told to come back on Thursday for a final decision. On Thursday, as we go to press, they were told that negotiations were continuing.

The CRC is notably conspi-

cuously by its silence. The Race Relations Board says that it is a religious issue and it cannot intervene but the Sikh Temple committee appears to have lost faith in the establishment race machine and is calling for a major demonstration on 9 November. The Leeds Trades Council have passed a motion in support, and all socialist and black organisations are expected to mobilise.

Race Today, Leeds



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KENILWORTH STRIKE DEFEATED

Eighteen months ago the Asian women at Kenilworth Components staged a one-day strike against long hours and low pay. The next day four of the most militant were declared 'redundant' and sent their cards. Last year twelve of them asked their boss, Norman Peake, for a pay rise. They were getting £12 for a 42½ hour week. He simply sacked them all and employed another lot on the same terms. Life at Kenilworth Components remained unchanged.

But in July this year things changed when 30 Asian women walked out on strike — the balance of forces had changed. The Imperial Typewriters' strike had just been won. Both the union, T&GWU, and the Department of Employment intervened; within a day the women were back at work with a wage increase from £13.37 to £18 and their working week shortened by 2½ hours (see *Race Today*, September and October). Later George Bromley, T&GWU negotiator, explained why: '... we did this for two reasons: because of the racial tension in this city and because these were such nice ladies....'

But Peake wouldn't tow the line and the victory was short-lived. A week later Peake claimed that he didn't have enough orders coming in and announced a three-day week for all his Asian workers. (White workers, however, continued to work the normal five days.) The Asians, both men and women, were to come in for three days doing ten hours a day to make up a 30-hour week. For the women this meant they were back at square one because at the end of the 30 hours they would take home the same £11 odd. The women's response was immediate. They were back on the picket line, this time with confidence and a lot of indignation. The strike was made official. Word spread that the Kenilworth women were out again and Asian workers from Barrington Products, Delta Mouldings, Walker Crisps and Imperial Typewriters came to support their pickets. The unity was both impressive and effective. Within a few days the men were persuaded to come out too. Peake's divide and rule strategy failed. Both men and women were now fighting the cut in their wages and impending redundancies.

The strike continued for six weeks and 'official' though it was no money came in from the union because, according to the rule book, workers don't qualify for strike pay until they have been members for 26 weeks. For most of these families, who anyway had been living from hand to mouth, the economic strain was tremendous. 'There was no money for my son's school dinners. I had to borrow it.' But the experience of the Imperial strike was still fresh and there was little danger of the struggle at Kenilworth being isolated.

The Asian community in Leicester had been polarised (particularly since the intervention of the National Front in the last strike), and workers who had supported the Imperial Typewriter strike were now offering the same support to the strikers at Kenilworth Components. It looked as if it was going to be an easy fight. The strikers were in a position of political strength. So what went wrong? We spoke with some of the women who were back at work and also with those who were sacked. Some interesting facts emerge:

One told us:

I was sacked on 17 August. A few days before the strike ended I was told that the Manager started coming outside and writing down the names of the women on the picket line. On the last day of the strike there were thirteen women present and when the strike was called off those were the thirteen he took back. I've never heard of anything more stupid. People say the union also agreed to this. Well I suppose they must have — they called the strike off, didn't they? In fact I was told by another lady who still works there that Mr. Hempstead (T&GWU district organiser) warned those thirteen women that if they didn't accept the return to work the union would make the strike unofficial.

In any case I don't believe there wasn't enough work. There were orders he wasn't telling us about. But who's going to listen to me? Mr. Hempstead from the union said he'd seen the books and that the factory really didn't have enough orders, but I've heard that Mr. Peake also has a factory in Manchester and our orders are being sent there.

This fact was verified by Parmatha, chairman of Branch 5325 (TGWU).

So on the one hand the 'shortage of work' was a straightforward ploy to get rid of a particular set of workers, and on the other, the women who were taken back are apparently the most militant (the ones present most regularly on the picket line). Irrational though it first seems there is a method to Peake's madness. And for the time being it's paid off. He took back those he *had* to — the ones who would have made the most trouble had they been sacked — and fortunately for him the union officials, who always seem so concerned about the 'proper way of doing things', have overlooked this small detail. The length of service was not considered and no 'last-to-come, first-to-go' rule applied here. The women who are now back at work say they dislike the arrangement but need the money. With the workforce cut to less than half they also have more work to do. For instance, in the packing room the job that formerly nine women did is now done by four. Meanwhile they are being timed with stop-watches so that production targets can be formally set and a bonus system worked out. The 'work study' is being

conducted by a team of five — Peake, a Manager from Manchester, two union officials and a man from the Department of Employment.

Perhaps a mess was inevitable. The Asian workers at Imperial Typewriters had attracted the attention of both the 'left' and the 'right'. Asians in Leicester's factories suddenly had to be reckoned with. The left saw for itself a source of power and the right recognised a threat. One wanted to control it and the other to destroy it. Neither wanted to help build its autonomous power. The Asian workers at Kenilworth became pawns in the larger political game.

Parmatha, who was on their strike committee, together with workers from Imperial Typewriters, Barrington Products, Walker Crisps and the International Socialists, had this to say at the end of the strike:

Too many people intervened and tried to dominate the struggle. The women themselves didn't speak much. They couldn't. There was a language problem because they only spoke Gujarati. As a result other people began to dominate the meetings and in my view a lot of wrong decisions were taken. For example when we discovered that there was another factory in Manchester where orders from Kenilworth could be sent, we wanted to send a coachload of strikers to picket that factory. The majority of workers there are black and I'm sure they would have been very sympathetic. But IS disagreed. They said we didn't have enough people to send there and that we should concentrate on the Leicester factory. Their plan was to try and stop production at Kenilworth by bringing out the white workers. We tried to tell them that it wasn't possible. We pointed out that all the white workers were either foremen, supervisors or scabs who had been employed during the strike, but then kept arguing and in the end, because people were lazy — or I don't know what — they persuaded everyone and had their way. No one went to Manchester. Instead the strike committee relied on Ken Hempstead, the T&GWU district organiser, to ask those Manchester workers to support the strike. He told us later that they had blacked goods from Kenilworth. But if we had gone there ourselves, who knows, they might even have come out.

However well-meaning, IS's strategy failed. The white workers continued to work. By viewing racism as a psychological problem, and trying to convert white workers to an anti-racist position (presumably through leaflets appealing for solidarity and unity), IS had undermined the only possibly unity that existed at the time — the support of other black workers in Manchester. Materially they had a reason to support the strike. With them it would not have been a matter of 'consciousness'. For the women who are back at Kenilworth the strike has meant more money but also more work. For the men it has meant 3p more an hour and a shorter working week.

SCANDAL AT THE ICCR



In his latest speech Sir Keith Joseph once again identifies the state's concern for the necessity of disciplining the working class in the community. There can be few people who do not identify

drugs, drunkenness, teenage pregnancies, vandalism, an increase in drifting – now called new names... the future unmarried mothers, delinquents, denizens of our borstals, subnormal educational establishments, prisons, hostels for drifters...

as a description which includes Black people.

The Community Relations Commission (CRC), through local councils, is the body that has been set up to do this disciplining in the Black community; numerous battles have been fought against it. A recent youth conference organised by the Commission resulted in resolutions being passed against it by Black youth workers themselves. Countless Community Relations Officers (CROs), and other staff, have fought against their 'role' as defined by the Commission. Sometimes, as in the case of Chris Mullard (Black CRO of Newcastle) the battle is a long one and ends in a blaze of publicity. Many others just resign and leave quietly. The Black community has witnessed the growth in the number of institutions, projects and their workers over the last few years – and uses them for their own purposes. These institutions in turn are constantly seeking new ways of controlling us, and in order to be closer to those they wish to control, most of the fieldworkers now employed by them are members of the immigrant community. After the case of the Brockwell 3 two more West Indian youth workers came to Brixton on the Brockwell Project.

The latest battle involves Pat Bell, mother of 24 who went to work at Islington Council for Community Relations (ICCR). She has just won an 18-month battle against them, and has succeeded in bringing to the public attention once again the function of these organisations and their expansion.

In April 1973, Pat Bell went to work as an Administrative Officer/Personnel Assistant to Alderman Cris St. Hill, the Senior CRO of the ICCR. She applied for the job because she thought she would get some job satisfaction in working with the immigrant community. She was given no job specification, no terms of reference and her duties seemed to fall between that of the Assistant CRO, Margaret Bray, and the Office Secretary, Shirley Braith-

waite. So whatever she did seemed to infringe on what they considered their duties, and conflict arose. She found that this situation could not be easily resolved because the organisation was run 'like a closely knit little club' with St. Hill at the top. He decided on staff holidays, pay, increments, and how grants were allocated and spent. These decisions would then be rubber-stamped by the Management Committee and Executive Committee, which is made up of people on the 'community relations' network and local government circuit of that area and which also operated like a club. The Chairman, Bev Woodroffe rose to fame over his involvement with the Black Studies Course at Tulse Hill (which, incidentally, the pupils started themselves with the assistance of a teacher). He was a local councillor for a year, but had to resign because of his heavy involvement with the ICCR. He has recently been appointed by the ILEA as Inspector for Community Relations.

Soon after Pat Bell was employed, four more officers were appointed: they were a Community Liaison Officer (Cypriot), Community Liaison Officer (Asian), Detached Youth Worker (West Indian), an Organiser for an Information and Advice Centre (West Indian), and another Office Secretary and later on an office junior.

The Asian Community Worker, through the ICCR, has applied for a grant of £11,800 from urban aid for an Islington Asian Community Centre. The theme of the application is: 'The majority of Asians are living in extremely bad housing conditions, which in turn is not only affecting the quality of their life but also in bringing the resultant disappointment, disenchantment and restlessness, especially among the younger generation.' The staff required would have to be trained to deal with young Asians. The Islington Multi-racial Neighbourhood Information and Advisory Centre for Young People has been given a grant of £43,450 from urban aid. It is proposed that two experienced youth and community workers be employed to manage and provide the services which would be: (1) to direct people to other agencies, including those of the Borough Council; (2) to advise on employment and training; (3) to introduce facilities and further education; (4) to inform on the availability of family planning facilities; (5) to encourage the use of recreational facilities; (6) to direct, where

necessary, to Legal Advice Centres. Finally, it is hoped that workers can find a way to improve relationships between young people and the police.

The application for £4,214.64 to urban aid for the Thornhill Neighbourhood Advice centre, an ICCR project, states that Thornhill Ward is the best area because:

(a) Substantial public activity and concern is being stimulated by extensive redevelopment;

(b) it contains an exceptionally high proportion of people of low socio-economic status (44% in social classes four and five which is the best indicator of social problems); (Sir Keith thinks so too)

(c) it has a sufficiently high proportion of immigrants (17% born overseas) to meet ICCR's desire to work in an immigrant area.

Community relations in Islington, like other areas, had changed from the 'committed liberal' or 'ambitious black' who had to mediate between an employer, a landlord, school authority or police. Now 'professional' officers are employed with defined functions; these functions vary from area to area and may overlap: Southall has an Asian woman who is responsible for Asian women; Wandsworth has a Volunteer Organiser/Public Relations Officer as well as ten other specialist staff; Birmingham has an Asian 'industrial relations' officer; Manchester has officers for education, industry, housing, youth and social welfare as well as two playgroup leaders, one playgroup organiser, a playbus leader and property manager and two language project officers. These officers are usually funded through local borough councils, urban aid or ILEA – urban aid being money that comes from central government but which is administered through the local borough council. In Islington Alderman St. Hill sits on the Social Service Committee which approves and supports applications for urban aid grants to projects. The Commission funds the CRO who is in charge of these officers.

Pat Bell went to work at Islington just as the transition from one-man band to a 'professional organisation' was taking place. Two of the new officers employed had been active in the black community before, and soon it wasn't just Pat Bell who was expressing concern not only about the undemocratic nature of the organisation but what 'community relations' really meant. They began to ask questions in staff meetings about how salary increases were awarded, conditions

of service, and their own roles: there might be 10 workers and 16 sub-committees but what was the ICCR doing?

In October 1973 four members of staff, all members of the immigrant community, joined the union NALGO. Soon after this the ICCR was restructured. A Management Committee was formed from the Executive Committee. This was an attempt to stave off the demands of the members of staff who were demanding that the ICCR function democratically.

They elected Harold Moore as their staff representative. The union then tried to negotiate better conditions for their members, but management ignored them (Pat Bell, Harold Moore, Jakis Zissimos and Anselm Samuel). Staff relations deteriorated and they were in two factions — union and non-union. Cris St. Hill asked Pat Bell to resign. She refused. Ann Gilman (an Executive member) and Bev Woodroffe, intervened. They came up with the solution of making Pat Bell Administrative and Secretarial Assistant to the Information and Advice Centre and the Training Scheme Project; this, they hoped, would ease the situation. When the 'rest of the staff' (the non-union members) heard of this they were furious. They wrote a memo to the chairman, stating that staff morale was very low, which wasn't helped by Woodroffe and Gilman who were further undermining the SCRO's authority. They claimed that this was being done already by the persistent questioning of the terms of reference of other members of staff by these union members. They requested that the chairman allow St. Hill to treat Pat's dismissal as an administrative matter.

They also complained about the difference in salaries they all had received, and threatened that if the major demands of the memorandum were not met 'they would be forced to seek support of the members of the executive who were sympathetic to them, and would withdraw their services en masse until such a time as their demands were satisfactorily met'. The situation got worse. The union still tried to negotiate proper conditions of employment for their members. Management continued more or less to ignore them, claiming that they were meeting to work this out. Ironically one of the members of the Management Committee who advised the ICCR and with whom NALGO had to negotiate was the ICCR's honorary solicitor Russell Mishcon — whose father is known in legal circles for representing trade unions. Eventually Pat Bell's salary was reviewed and in May 1974, after a year's service, she was given an increment of £12 per annum. It was known to her that other members of staff had gotten much more, much earlier. NALGO complained. Months later the memo from the 'rest of the staff' came to light. Pat Bell asked Harold Moore to raise the matter with Bev Woodroffe who, it appeared, took no action. She then

raised it at a staff meeting and was merely laughed at. On 8 August she finally wrote to the chairman and through him demanded an apology from the five members of staff concerned.

The following day Pat Bell was given a letter informing her that she was suspended on full pay until a meeting could be convened to discuss the situation fully. The letter also informed her that 'she would be entitled to be heard and/or represented, and that she should not discuss the affairs of the ICCR with any person or body outside the ICCR. The meeting was convened for 11 September. Two days before this she received a charge sheet from the ICCR after being suspended for a month. NALGO advised her not to attend the meeting but representatives of the union attended and asked for an adjournment which was then refused by the Executive.

Meanwhile Head Office (the Commission) had got wind of the affair, and were discussing its implications. On 6 September they agreed that the solution would be to dismiss Pat Bell and Harold Moore. On 11 September the meeting of the ICCR Executive, which staff attended, voted to dismiss Pat Bell and reprimand Harold Moore. At this meeting there seemed to be a clear division between the old Executive members on the one hand and the newly appointed members of the immigrant community on the other, as to whether or not Pat Bell should be dismissed and Harold Moore should be reprimanded. The case against them was that they had published the contents of a confidential document (the staff memo) and had brought the ICCR into disrepute.

The union backed them all the way. They demanded that she be re-instated immediately and a public enquiry be made into the affairs and internal practices of the ICCR. Pickets were outside the office continuously and they threatened industrial action. A demonstration was held in Islington and letters appeared in *West Indian World* and the local paper, all expressing concern and dismay over her treatment and at what was taking place in the ICCR.

Other people in the area became involved in her case. Meanwhile the counter-attack was launched, of course, from the 'black community' and the following leaflet appeared. However, this organisation does not exist and the people whose names appear on it deny having anything to do with it. It should be noted that some of the information on it could only come from the ICCR itself.

Finally, the Executive agreed that an appeal could be heard. N.C. Hinton, Personnel Officer for the London Borough of Islington, was called in to mediate. Although Woodroffe appointed six people who had voted on the original decision. On 24 October Pat Bell was re-instated.

The last weekend in September, St. Hill left for a three-month holiday in the

Caribbean for which he was given a £500 grant from the ICCR. Who is St. Hill? A one-time ticket vendor at Drayton Park tube station who did a course in social administration. In 1967 he became honorary secretary to the then Islington International Friendship Council which received a grant of £100 from Islington Borough Council. When the Government stepped in and 'took over' community relations, St. Hill was automatically elected CRO. He worked hard in the field of community relations and in 1971 was elected as an Alderman because of his 'good work' for the community. He is one of the 'black spokesmen' whose rise to power has been through the community relations network. This section is growing in strength and numbers in this country. His brother-in-law is Labour Commissioner for St. Lucia and will doubtless be of use to him on his working holiday where he intends to look at 'any changes in education, racial attitudes and social and economic developments which would have been affected by international events — in particular, world politics.'

It is obvious that St. Hill felt the pressures of managing an expanding organisation (something for which he has been financially rewarded). But it is important not to fall into the trap that some have of talking about amateur employers and inefficient management (there has even been a suggestion that an O/M (Organisation and Methods) person should be sent in to sort out the mess), and plans have been put forward for the restructuring of the ICCR. The call for democracy within the ICCR is one that many community workers in other Councils will support, but electing people to sit on these bodies does not distinguish the functions of these institutions in relation to the struggles of black people — and must not detract from us seeing the function that they, and those who remain within them, are there to perform.

ATTENTION!

DON'T BE CONNED DON'T BE FOOLED

Harold Moore earns £2300 a year plus another £250 for expenses.

IS THAT UNFAIR

Harold Moore was employed by the ICCR since JULY 1973 to run a project at 129 Newington Green Road N5 to help our young black brothers and sisters get jobs and get homes to live.

Ask him what has he done about it. He has done nothing.

Let's have some solidarity and support for our young black brothers and sisters of Hackney, Haringey and Islington.

Somebody is trying to take you for a ride. Tell them NO. Tell them you want to take a walk, a five minute walk from Highbury Corner to 129 Newington Green Road to see what has been done there. You will see NOTHING.

WHO IS UNFAIR TO WHO

Pat Bell earned £1900 a year for working four days a week.

WHO IS UNFAIR TO WHO

Pastor MORRIS, Brother HERMAN, Brother BIRCH, Sister CHERYL, Sister MAG and our Brothers at the KESKIDEE Centre.

All these brothers and sisters work almost 24 hours a day, seven days a week year in and year out.

Not one of them earn £1000 a year. They don't mind that because their only interest is our young black brothers and sisters of North London who they are helping to get jobs, get some place to stay and keep out of prison.

Let our solidarity and support be for the young blacks of North London.

Printed and distributed by the North London Young Peoples Solidarity Press. Hackney E.8.

THE TRIBALS OF INDIA

A NATION IN CHANGE

by Farrukh Dhondy



The adivasi retain their own social institutions. The boy in the picture has been caught stealing from the community and the elected policeman, the dakhwa, puts him through a ceremonial humiliation.

Underdevelopment is a relative term and can mean many things. In today's world it cannot mean living outside the influence of the dominant capitalist mode of production. The claws of international capital have reached the remotest of peoples, all the world's its colony and no segment of the population on this planet escapes its pressures. It is an irony of this world order that where there is the least accumulation of capital, its dominance is the greatest. The unevenness of the capital accumulation levels all over the world gives rise to the relative exploitation of different communities in the world. New orders and old coexist or rub shoulders. To use the metaphor of Marx, one system grows in the womb of another and grows as it were, with a matricidal wish.

Out of India's five hundred and sixty million people, thirty million are constitutionally classed as 'tribals'. The term

'adivasi', which means aborigine, is also applied to them. They are known as scheduled tribes because their names appear on the schedules of the constitution framed by the nationalist leaders of India at the time of Independence.

Through the use of tautology, a dodge, the framers of the constitution have evaded defining 'tribals'. They merely say that those whom the constitution calls tribals shall be henceforth known as tribals.

Marx and Engels in their writings characterised a backward society as one with a stagnant social structure. Only in one sense can the social institutions of the tribals be seen as stagnant. Through centuries they have resisted the march of successive waves of conquerors. They have used their tribal cohesion to resist the encroachments of the imperial pattern of India's history. A section of them still

live in the relative segregation of the forests and hills of India, removed physically from the mainstream of Indian development, but not unaffected by it. For centuries they have carried on a struggle against the plains people of India; in the past it has been a war to be left alone. History doesn't leave people alone, and their history has been one of the steady erosion of their isolation until today, as a section of the Indian population they face either total absorption or a total extinction of their identity. The 'tribal question' is simply this: on whose terms will that absorption, that growth into the modern world take place?*

Very little is said about the tribals of India in the Western press outside the pages of the National Geographic magazine and suchlike. There are of course several studies of the tribals, sociological and cultural, somewhat nostalgic accounts

of their customs and rituals. The missionaries of Imperial India and subsequently the Indian government encouraged such studies and Nehru himself lends authority to the myth that the tribals have a way of life which can be looked at as a sort of noble savagery or savage innocence. It is an innocence which is fast disappearing. Indeed one may say it never existed. The history of the tribals is entering a phase in which their problems are the problems of the whole country, their struggles of the Indian people as a whole.

Traditionally the tribals have been seen as a nation within a nation, the over-exploited amongst the exploited. Their fight has been one for land and for autonomy, against the Hindus, the Muslims, the British and now against the projected patterns of development that India as an 'independent' nation follows. For over a century the tribals in different parts of India have fielded guerilla forces and fought campaigns to eliminate the landlords and agents of British and Indian rule. Marx in his Notes on Indian History mentions the Santal campaign of 1855 which preceded the war of independence sometimes referred to as the Indian Mutiny.

Section of the population with nothing to lose

More recently, in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa, the tribal revolt posed the question of armed agrarian revolution. The rulers of India were panic stricken and reacted with the savagery characteristic of the encounters between British regiments and tribal bands. The tribals of India are that segment of the population with the most to lose. They have not fought the union fight of the wage labourer, because as yet they have not been totally proletarianised. The government of India is painfully aware that they are that section of the population who have nothing to lose but their chains, that section of the population whose power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

The tribals form seven per cent of the

whole of India's population. They inhabit almost all the states of India, and are concentrated largely in Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Assam, West Bengal, Andhra, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland. Amongst them there are still those whose dominant mode of production is food gathering, but for the large part they have settled in the forest regions and in villages remote from the urban centres. In the last twenty five years, the progress of capitalism has meant for some of them the transformation into wage labourers, into urban and semi-urban dwellers. It has meant work and exploitation on construction sites, in mines and on plantations. While ninety per cent of them still get their main livelihood from cultivation (details follow), only one per cent of them have been absorbed into the mainstream of manufacturing labour.

The tribes have hundreds of subdivisions. The chief amongst them in numbers are the Gonds, the Bhils, the Santals, the Oraon, the Khond, Munda, Boro Kachari and the Nagas. Some of the tribals of North Eastern India have been recently declassified as tribals because they have found employment on the tea plantations and this transformation from independence to wage labour has changed, in one sense, their objective position within 'the problem' as it is seen by the government. Their declassification indicates that the government feels that they don't any more need to be given privileges as tribals as they have passed into the modes of production of wealth of the country. It also reveals that the ultimate aim of the 'concessions' given to tribals is to bring them into the routines of wage labour.

It is a contradictory kind of benevolence. The framers of the Indian constitution and the succeeding monarchs of India, Indira Gandhi and lesser princes, have seen the tribal problem as the speedy and efficient extension of benevolence, plans and money to project the tribals into modernity. The solution has involved the extension of paper patronage to the tribals, the passing of laws protecting them from land-grabs, protecting them from moneylenders, and even protecting them from themselves and their propensity to drink alcohol. Again on paper, the tribals are ensured reserved places in education and in employment.

A commission appointed by the government in 1960 under U.N. Dhebar ten years after the constitutional machinery went into action, demonstrated the failure of this strategy and these patronising recipes. The hope of the constitutionalists had not materialised. Proclamations, the commission concluded, had failed to protect the interests of the tribals, much less succeeded in protecting their lands which were fast being expropriated by old and new land owning classes including the central capital machine of the state itself.

The material symptoms of the problem of the tribals are the problem itself. The acceleration through education and preferential employment of the tribals has failed. The actual forces of accumulation and the market have played havoc with

the policy of protecting the tribals. The repeated injunctions in parliament are quite futile, the laws have been seen to be inoperable as more and more tribal lands pass into the hands of capital and as the gap between the literacy and employment potential of the tribals and other people increases. In Indian politics, an injection of well-meaning, uncorrupt sincerity is often seen as the solution to the largest problems of the Indian economy. If we abandon this idealism and look instead at the material forces which give rise to insincerity and corruption, if we in fact trace the growth of the productive forces of the country, we can see that what is required is not a miraculous change of heart, but a change in the relationships of production. Quite simply, we must look at who owns what, what the economy produces, who takes it and for whom it is produced.

Refusal to be developed on capitals terms

Some facts and figures reveal the pattern of underdevelopment within underdevelopment of the tribals. Their poverty in material terms is almost inconceivable in a country which constantly boasts of having taken its righteous position in the modern world. The per capita income of the tribal families in several states is approximately Rs. 105 (£5) a year. Most of these families (figures from a survey conducted by the Gandhi Smarak Samiti) live for most of the year on one meal a day. Over ninety per cent of them subsist on a diet of roots for part of the year. The land that they cultivate has been systematically neglected in the process of capitalist investment. In concrete terms this can be seen by the acreage that is irrigated in tribal lands. About 17% of Indian arable land is irrigated. Dams, canals and wells, built under the capital expenditure of the five year plans, have brought water to these lands and reduced the dependence of the tiller on god and the weather. In parts of India, notably Punjab, this basic investment, together with capital investment on machines, tractors, pumps, seed research, fertiliser, storage space etc. have brought about the capitalist green revolution. Yet there is no irrigation on tribal lands. In Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, about two per cent of the tribal land has been brought under irrigation schemes.

The percentage of literacy is yet another sorry tale. In Andhra Pradesh, while twenty five per cent of the population can read and write, only four per cent of the tribal population has been taught how. In Kerala, the most literate state of India, while nearly fifty per cent of the population is literate, a mere seventeen per cent of the tribal population can read and write. Even though a school teacher is provided by the government for each large village, the children of the tribals don't attend the school, or they drop out of schooling as they get older, in a search for food, clothes and shelter. The subsistence level of their families require that they go to work.

So much for the failure of the government's good intentions. No tribal has put up a struggle for the literacy that leads

*A friend of mine recently made a film on the nomad Tuareg tribes of Niger. The Tuareg have lived for thousands of years in the Sahara. They face extinction because of repeated drought in the southern Sahara which pushes the desert and the nomads southwards. Their water and livestock are going and they have been forced to choose between living on a wage of 28 pence a day building missionary sponsored dams and canals and settlements, or evolve a struggle for something else. What else? The film made the point that the Tuareg are sitting on some of the largest deposits of uranium in the world. Alongside the shifting settlements of the nomads in the desert there is now a town of air conditioned houses with swimming pools for the French company workers and officials who 'own' 80% of the uranium and have begun to mine it. The Tuareg problem is that they get nothing from this uranium except government permission to beg food from the charity of the USA. The wealth of their land could turn the Tuareg into oil sheikhs overnight. In spite of the film maker presenting this fundamental view of the problem of genocidal underdevelopment, he was pressed with phone calls asking why there were no camel dances and pretty shots of Sahara vultures in the film.

directly to wage slavery. They have fought for their lands. Manhattan island, it is said, was bought for a handful of beads from the tribals of North America. The same string of beads changes hands everyday in the tribal areas of India. If the struggle for survival is dependent on anything, it is dependent on the land. In a theoretical sense, just as the Red Indians owned between them the whole of America, so the tribals held the whole of India. But that's a prehistoric story. The whole history of the tribals has been one of the steady acquisition of land from their communities by non-tribals.

Rise of the moneylender

The growth of the national bourgeoisie after independence has meant a stepping up of this process. Paradoxically, the British laws were more effective in preventing the transfer of Adivasi lands than the laws that have been enacted since. Under the British New Tenancy Law of 1902, no land could be transferred from adivasis. Under the 1947 Act, the adivasi who pays forty times the annual produce can get his land transferred to the Old Tenancy Act, under which he is able to

sell it. As primitive cultivators in a modern world, the tribals cannot scrape a subsistence from their small holdings and continuously get into debt. Their indebtedness to moneylenders and landlords increases year by year and the 'surplus' produce and part of their capital stock changes hands.

Seventy five to eighty per cent of all tribal workers are cultivators. Agriculture is the mainstay of the tribal economy. Over seventy per cent of these cultivators have holdings of less than ten acres and very few of them can claim that the holdings or the livestock and the investment with which they run the holdings are theirs.

From a survey by the Bihar Tribal Research Institute in Ranchi, we can see that out of two hundred families in one village, 132 were found to be inextricably in debt. The moneylender, who holds the lives of the tribals in thrall, operates in various ways in this economy. He lends hard cash to tribals at seed time, loans out implements and loans back the bullocks and cattle which he has taken as security against earlier loans. The rates of interest vary from between 150 to 600

per cent. The moneylender acts initially as a trader in commodities and later as a banker. He demands the land they hold as security, a promise of a share in the produce of the land, and eventually the binding over of their own labour to their land. After years of this manner of exploitation most of the tribal cultivators are reduced to being share croppers or wage labourers on their own land. At harvest time the carts of the moneylenders roll up and are loaded with grain that the debt is repaid in. It is not merely a creaming off of an adequate surplus. By providing carts at the door of the producer, a moneylender can firstly quote his own price for the grain, a price which has no bearing on the market value of the produce, and he can use his own weights and measures to pull a swindle.

Sometimes the repaid grain is paid back as a further loan. The final step is the transfer of land to the moneylender who becomes the absentee landlord, with the tribal family retaining a hold on the land as labourers or share croppers, or being driven off it completely so that an illegal sale can be concluded. The debt passes from father to son, and though tribal honesty and honour require that it be paid, the reason that the indebtedness goes from generation to generation is that the economy leaves the tribal no option within it. His only option remains to destroy the system that chains him to his debt.

The cycle of indebtedness has become part of the cycle of production in the tribal communities. No amount of legislation can do away with or break into this cycle. The moneylender is not a ruthless stereotype of a villain, but rather a shrewd businessman whose rise as a class depends on the fact that the tribal lands are unable to support the life of the community without his intervention as a capital investor in their production and in their modes of life. The moneylender will readily hand out money to the tribal who wants to celebrate a festival or important family occasion. The process has transformed moneylenders into respectable landlords and into Presidents of Cooperative Credit societies. They buy themselves into the structure of the ruling party and become the bosses of the local political hierarchy, increasing their gravitational pull and consequently their power. The tribals cannot resort to the law against the landlord for fear that their means of livelihood will disappear in the long and corrupt process of litigation and hypothetical redress. The moneylender is the only source of credit for the tribal and the loss of this source of credit means the loss of the ability to produce at even the poor level of production that exists.

The failure of production means the accompanying failure of a way of life. The realisation is attendant upon dire need, and over the last five years it has become clear to the tribals that nothing short of an agrarian revolution can solve the problem of the land. The uprisings in Bastar, in Singbhoom, in Srikakulam, and in Koraput in Orissa have frightened the government into moving troops and building communications in these areas.



The local booze shop. It sells rice, beer, a staple drink and provides cots for its customers.



A village blacksmith makes weapons and implements with methods used a thousand years ago. His son in the picture turns the wheel that stokes the bellows.

Struggle to control the land

Earlier this year in the Dhulia district of Maharashtra the tribals began to implement a strategy of crop-seizure. Over the years, the tribals have been reduced to labour on the land they once owned, which is now in the hands of companies that grow sugar cane and *jhowar*. In particular areas of this state the population of tribals is as high as seventy five per cent. At harvest time, after months of initial unrest and civil disobedience, the tribals launched a campaign to harvest the crop themselves and keep the produce. The landlords, alive to the threat, called in the state police and began to raise a private army, equipped with jeeps, dogs, motorcycles and guns.

The incident is not merely symptomatic; it is representative of the awareness and organisation growing amongst the tribals. Not only are they aware that their labour and former land is being used for the enrichment of a rising class, but there is also the consciousness of the fact that tribal lands are rich in mineral resources and possess vast stores of wealth for the future development of the entire economy. The tribal areas are potentially some of the richest in India. The planned economy of Congress rule has directed several projects and factories to these areas. The government of India has itself been responsible for large scale expropriation of tribal lands and resources. Power projects, steel mills, mines, heavy engineering factories etc. have all been placed in the tribal areas.

With the help of foreign capital, both Soviet and International Monopoly capital, the steel mills of Rourkela, Bhilai, the mines in Dhanbad, the heavy engineering works at Ranchi, have all been sited on lands which the tribals originally held. During the construction phase of these investments, the tribal youths were given employment as they answered in large numbers the call for unskilled labour. No sooner were these projects past their construction phase when the skilled and semi-skilled 'permanent' jobs went to the non-tribal populations brought in and settled in the newly constructed towns. The tribals, pulled out of their settlements for the construction phase have been pushed out to the fringes of these towns and the access to the wage that they afford.

Existence in the factory towns

In the new townships, notably the steel towns of Jamshedpur, Rourkela and Bhilai, the tribals whose labour helped construct the towns have set up their hutments and shanties on the borders, on the outskirts of the new electrified villages. The breakup of their old society under the impact of the planned one, has not provided them with a home or a pattern of life or even with an alternative means of livelihood. In the Heavy Engineering Works at Ranchi the number of tribals employed in the factory are negligible. They make up five per cent of the wage labour force of the factory, and out of the fifteen hundred 'class I' employees,

only five are from the scheduled tribes.

The working day of the tribals on the fringes of the factory towns is something that no other section of a proletariat in the twentieth century is subject to. The wage labouring family depends only partially on the wage which one or two members get from the unskilled work in the factory itself. They spend part of the working day, usually the early morning and the hours after work, in the adjoining forests gathering twigs, brushwood, roots, for fuel and sometimes for food. They tend to the few animals they keep to subsidise their living. They still rely on wells and local reservoirs for their water supply. Within the settlement are to be found the destroyed craftsmen of the twentieth century — the sandal makers, the workers in the small *bidi* (tobacco leaf rolled on itself to make a primitive cigarette) factories, the potters and blacksmiths who still make the sort of implements for digging and cutting that were made a thousand years ago.

The path of development

It has made little or no difference to the tribals that the accumulated capital which has encroached on and broken up their way of life, to which they owe their penury and their slavery, belongs to the state or to private enterprise. They can recognise capital as nothing but the instrument of destruction for them and the instrument of progress for others, be it the capitalist or the labour hierarchies that capital breeds. State ownership in India has meant the opposite of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Very broadly, it has meant, in the rhetoric of the congress party and its 'mixed economy', the building of the non-profit sector base of industry in order that the profit or private sector can flourish.

All this data merely points to the conclusion that it is no good indulging in the hypocritical romanticism of the legislators of India. Their perspectives and statutes are voices from a cruel past, and at best they are describers of a present who don't materially see the progress of India as a whole. The eminent tribal scholar, Verrier Elwin, is the best exponent of this romantic survival perspective. In a foreword to his book on the Nagas, he professes to be a disciple of Nehru's policies and quotes one of Nehru's speeches:

I am ashamed when I see not only in this country but in other great countries too . . . how anxious people are to shape others according to their own image or likeness, and to impose on them their particular way of living. We are welcome to our own way of living, but why impose it on others?

I am not at all sure which is the better way of living, the tribal or our own. In some respects I'm quite certain that their's is better. Therefore it is grossly presumptuous on our part to approach them with an air of superiority, to tell them how to behave or what to do and what not to do. There is no point in trying to make of them a second-rate copy of ourselves.

In having adopted this stance, burying one's head in the sand of the nearest

words at hand, Nehru and the bourgeoisie of India evaded the point of the 'tribal problem'. These are surprising words from the self-proclaimed architect of industrial India, whose schemes and patterns of development have brought millions of people from villages into cities, whose licences of development to the capitalist class have brought other millions into the factories and into the manufacture of goods that they don't consume. Unfortunately it still needs pointing out that the clash of societies and cultures occurs not because of the plainsman's will to impose a way of life on the tribals, but through the direct mechanism of the acquisition of land and resources, the deforestation of India in the interests of a particular path of development.

The energies of the people of India have only been released in resistance to this pattern of development, and not in the construction of it. And this is not merely a question of the priorities of planning. In practice the production targets of planners are never met because the will to develop never comes as a gift from above, as proclamations of intent and directives for behaviour. The mixed economy development has basically served to destroy the tribals, the conditions of their societies and the pressures under which they live are a living proof that the path of development and social organisation that India has followed has nothing but destruction to offer them. The institutions of their society still remain primitively 'communist' and in that organisation lies an energy and a direction. They have not demanded to be left alone, they have demanded autonomy. They have not rejected being in contact with accumulation, they have merely been forced into a painful relationship with it.

Entry into national politics

There has been in the past years a lot of debate, especially amongst the communist parties of India, about the growth of tribal consciousness to national consciousness. There is no doubt today, that even if it hasn't been totally accomplished, the dominant trend of development or stagnation of the productive forces of the society has forced the tribals to see themselves in the context of the future of the whole country. One doesn't merely have to point to the tribal who becomes a candidate for the vice-presidency of the whole of India. The name of Mr. Horo on the presidential ticket of the opposition parties is an indication of the opportunities the politicians are seizing to give the tribals a 'token nigger'. Amongst the tribals themselves, apart from the growth of secessionist movements which naturally see themselves in relation not only to India but to the world community of nations, there has grown a more realistic movement of political parties and voices.

The Jharkand party with its base in Chottanagpur in the states of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and a bit of Bengal, stands on the platform of a demand for a separate Jharkand state. The party works on the realisation that the wealth of these



The village shoemaker, a craftsman in decline.

states in industrial and material terms is concentrated in those areas over which the tribals have a historic and traditional claim. The Jharkand party, now split into a pro-Congress and a pro-opposition faction, has been jollied along by the bosses of India's political hierarchy from whom they say they hope to win concessions for their restless and angry people. Though there may be justice in the claim, the demand will have to find its own dynamo of power. The number of tribal workers within the factories of the projected state territory is too small to give them a viable industrial base of action. In recent years the tribals have discovered that the way to gain any democratic demand from the state government is to organise the massive disruption of a particular district, and if need be organise an armed revolt. Strange as it may seem, the last few 'revolts' of the adivasis in Bihar have been uprisings with bows and arrows in hand, a confrontation between armed police and a daunting force of tribals armed with bows, arrows, darts and traditional weapons.

Among the Mizos and Nagas of the north the guerilla war goes further, in that for the last fifteen years they have been crossing the northern borders to China to receive training and arms. The control and extermination of the Nagas and Mizos has given the government a basic perspective on counter insurgency in the tribal areas, and the main thrust of its organisation has turned from concession politics to containment politics.

The armed struggle of the girijans of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal under the leadership of the several factions of the Marxist Leninist party, were seen in the party's literature as the spark that would set off the prairie fire of an all-Indian revolution. The revolt failed to make an assessment of the balance of forces, national and international, and

though brilliantly led in its separate encounters with the army and police, it has had to postpone after systematic annihilation, its armed stance.

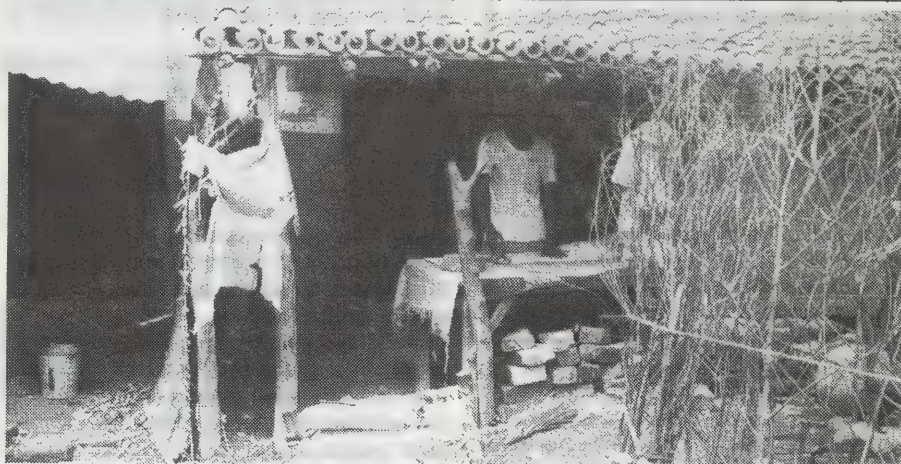
Since the years of Naxal revolt, as it has come to be called, the organisation of the left parties amongst the tribals has come to the surface in different ways. The crop-seizure and land-seizure movements in different parts of India, the agitation for regions of development within the states whose taxation and expenditure would be given over to tribals, point not only to the growing amount of work done by the CPI(M), for instance, amongst the tribals, but to the objective growth of a national consciousness amongst the tribals themselves — not as romanticised social organisations, but as the nation-class of people at the receiving end of the developmental upheaval.

The very constitutional mechanism of the 'schedule', the list of peoples afforded scanty privileges, has activated and directed the growth of the movement. The laws against the alienation of their lands, hypocritical and ineffectual as they may be, have focussed the tribal attention on the bourgeois mechanisms of accumulation at their expense. It has made them in a sense the spearhead (not to be confused with 'vanguard') for the demand of land to the tiller and land to the purposes of the tilling society, be they agricultural or industrial. Possession of the land will

solve very little, but the fight for that possession is destined to change all. The struggle for land inevitably leads, if its perspective is success, to the struggle for state power and thence to the control of resources and accumulated capital.

All received plans of development, though they can improve on the model and performance of the present ruling class, must inevitably subjugate the advance of the tribals to the 'national good'. In simple terms, the resources of their land and the surpluses of their labour power, even under the leadership of the CPI (the Moscow orientated Communist Party), for instance, can only be expropriated for 'socialist accumulation'.

The contact of the 'tribal peasantry' with semi-urban and urban culture, their brutal and precipitate transformation into wage labourers and sharecroppers and serfs in 'independent India', has already ploughed and fertilised the consciousness that makes their struggle the struggle of the whole Indian peasantry. The road they have indicated to socialism is one that must demand from a position of armed power to bypass the stage of mass proletarianisation under the domination of a capitalist class of landlords and managers, of whatever political profession. For the international movement, they pose the question of a leap into the twentieth century without the attendant brutalisation that 'primitive accumulation' entails.



The village laundry-washing in the pond and ironing for those who can afford to pay for it.



The government attempts to foster their version of a national consciousness through a civil defense effort in the adivasi villages. The tribals have their own use for the signpost.

...BACKLASH

CHILE

Race Today Replies

Last issue was the first time *Race Today* had heard an opinion from Big Flame since we took the journal over almost a year ago. Both Big Flame Backlashes, one from West London and one from Liverpool, disagreed with the article by Leoncio on Chile. We are not experts on Chile, but we are third world people who have a political perspective which is international and take this occasion to state very generally and very briefly the framework of that perspective.

1. Liverpool asks: '... what was the working class's relation to the UP, the political parties and most importantly, the institutions of the bourgeois state?' To distinguish between the governing parties — the UP — and the State is to

lose the meaning of 'State'. We have heard of 'Marxists' who didn't understand that the State was more than the government. But we've never heard of 'Marxists' who didn't know the government was part of the State.

The BF pamphlet on Chile referred to in the Backlashes says on its first page: 'Firstly we have to see Allende as a sincere socialist; his was a working-class, not bourgeois reformism. Secondly, Allende and the UP did recognise that the bourgeois constitution did need changing.'

Firstly, for us there is no such thing as working class reformism either here (who are they in Britain?) or there (Allende). 'The working class is revolutionary or it is nothing.' We don't stop applying Marxism when we land on non-European soil; it is there we learnt much of our Marxism.

Secondly, bourgeois constitutions don't need changing; they need burning.

Furthermore, you agree with Leoncio that 'the autonomous class struggle' should not be hidden. He says the class was autonomous of the parliamentary political parties, the trade unions, that is, autonomous from the State. You never say what you think the working class was autonomous from, as though autonomy was a state of being alone, rather than a level of struggle against capital.

2. Liverpool: 'The scenario — capitalist development versus working class refu-

sal — is immediately suspect in the Chilean context and very much an imposition of a European model.'

The value of Leoncio's article to us was that it distinguished working class needs from the need of capital — development — in a Third World country, where these two have been most confused. Why is the slavery of the assembly line in the interest of workers in Chile and not in the interest of workers at Ford Halewood? In later issues we will take up the dilemma of workers in the Third World, which is not the peculiarity of their needs, which we in Europe share, but the tremendous barriers to achieving these needs, which we in Europe must realise we also share if revolution is to be international, that is, if it is to succeed. Viewing these barriers as a 'Third World problem' has been the basis of Eurocentrism, often held also by Third World bureaucrats and technocrats (in our out of power), that capitalist development and working class interest are interchangeable in the Third World. Leoncio says: The Socialist experiment sought to establish a co-operative alliance between the State and the working class, would-be partners in a radically new programme of national economic development.' This may be new to you in Europe, but those of us from the colonies cut our political teeth on these nationalist, i.e. capitalist politics. We learnt that capital 'turns every economic progress into a social calamity' no less in Chile than in Liverpool or West London.

3. Liverpool: 'The author ignores that in Chile the bourgeoisie never struggled for production; they refused to invest and tried to accelerate the economic crisis. And they did this, of course, because of working class struggle. But not their struggle against 'production' as such; rather their struggle for the control, organisation and management of production.' (Liverpool's emphasis.)

The first sentence makes no sense. If the bourgeoisie isn't struggling for production, it is not the bourgeoisie. Some foreign capital would not invest in Chile, not as a planned attack on the working class but because the working class was not producing at the rate it wanted. Allende's government came in to 'stop the rot' and succeeded only in having its plans co-opted by the working class to accelerate this rate of non-production.

Capital before, during and since Allende has planned for workers to develop productivity by taking control of production. Here is the *Wall Street Journal* of 3 June 1974:

[The junta have] begun distributing land deeds to urban squatters and landless peasants. They are finishing public housing halted by the Marxists' inflation. A school breakfast and lunch program to improve nutrition among the poor is underway. Meanwhile, soon to come are new laws establishing worker-management consultative committees in industry, compulsory job-advancement training programs, unemployment compensation and an improved social

Reply From Leoncio

The decision of the Big Flame organisation to discuss the problem of organisation in the context of recent events in Chile was an unfortunate one. First, the working class in Chile has suffered a significant defeat which must in some way reflect negatively on the quality of organisation there. Given the coup, common political sense would say that to search for positive models of working class organisation within the Chilean experience is an ill-fated enterprise. Second, the implication is that 'the development of the productive forces against capitalist underdevelopment' makes the struggle in Chile fundamentally different from the struggle in the United Kingdom. If this were true, then the appropriate universe of discussion on organisation in the UK is the UK. If, on the other hand, we accept the international character of the working class struggle, then, prior to any consideration of organisation, we should try to reach a clear understanding of what the working class in Chile as well as in the UK struggles for.

To say that the struggle is 'for the control, organisation and management of production', or to make the economy work in the interests of the working class, or 'to take state power', is to misrepresent the working class. These positions abstract from the specifically capitalist character

of production, the economy, and the State in order to present them as entities that lie outside of the working class and capital and over which capitalists and workers fight to gain control. The political conception of the parties in the UP coalition was very similar and just as alien to the working class struggle in Chile. Capitalist production at its most basic level is the forcing of the working class to work and produce far beyond what the working class considers necessary. Capitalist economy (scarcity and limitation) is the systematic dissatisfaction of working class demands. Capitalist State is the formalised power that makes the working class work, either directly with soldiers in the factories, in the streets, and in the homes as in Chile or indirectly in the myriad of different ways the State accomplishes its objective. To propose that the working class take control, organise, and manage these processes rather than subvert them is to propose the workers' self-exploitation and self-repression. Just as in Chile the working class refused these positions, Big Flame should do the same. Only the struggle against work adequately and unambiguously characterises international working class politics today.

17 October 1974

BACKLASH ... BACKLASH

Black America

security system for blue collar workers . . .

The military's solution [to their problems]: no more politics. Introduce the work ethic and respect for individual achievement. (Our emphasis)

The junta are interested in 'work', not politics. 'Politics' is the struggle against the state. We know what 'work' is. They are opposites, another way of expressing that workers control of production and worker's autonomy are class enemies. The work ethic seems not to have had enough hold in Chile. This is sometimes called the refusal of work in Europe; it does not change name in Chile, only language.

What distinguished the Allende period was that because of working class struggle, capital in Chile was divided, and one section tried to incorporate the working class into its plans in a way that gave the working class a chance to make its own plans — that is, to use capital. The junta is trying to do the same thing another way. At first, the support of the army for Allende was based on the basic agreement between the UP and the Christian Democrats (whom the junta have now turned against). That agreement began to dissolve when the working class developed its capacities and its range of struggle beyond anything the parties and the unions could 'arrange' to contain it. The junta overthrew Allende not because he was a 'sincere socialist' but because he could not control the working class.

4. Liverpool: We should understand that in a country like Chile, the development of the productive forces against capitalist underdevelopment, is an important and radical component of working class consciousness.

No! The fundamental component of working class consciousness internationally is the highest level of development of the productive forces reached anywhere in the world. *Third World people are not backward because the technology is.* Europeans who think this (and then call themselves a vanguard as West London does) are not only misunderstanding the Third World but also the productive forces. These are not only made up of technology but of the level of human need and capacity. If the technology is low where we are, that is a crisis precisely because our needs and our capacities are restricted and imprisoned by that technology. *Our crisis is not the crisis of consciousness but of access to power.*

5. Liverpool: 'Big Flame is in disagreement with your [i.e. *Race Today*]'s assessment of the UP government.' Here we are identified with Leoncio. We accept. Frankly, we sensed from the beginning that this was a critique as much of *Race Today* as of Leoncio's piece. Leoncio is 'crudely one-sided'. So are we. Capital (we prefer this to 'the bourgeoisie') did not try to use the UP; it was the UP. (It is also the junta.) The UP did not 'try to accommodate itself and the working class to sections of the bourgeoisie.' (It needed

to accommodate only the working class, it was the bourgeoisie. That is the job capital, when it calls itself socialist, is there to perform. 'The answer to capital's crisis in Chile was called the Chilean road to socialism.'

This confusion about who is capital and who is the State is widespread among the European left. We believe that in Britain it stems particularly from a long Social Democratic tradition in some sections of the working class and an imperialist rate of profit to buy out those who were, according to Marx, 'demoralised'. *To be demoralised is to be more conscious of the power of the State than the power of the working class against it.* To be demoralised in one country can result in a demoralised view of another. The situation in the Third World, in the countries from which we come, or from which our parents came, is tough. Repression is hard, the State shoots to kill, the work is more intense and the wages are lower or non-existent. The reason we are not demoralised by this is that the struggle is continually bursting out and widening its perspective.

Leoncio, it is true, did not deal in this article with why the working class did not succeed in taking State power. At least he knew who *had* State power and it was better, we think, that he began to say what the working class accomplished against that State.

In Chile the working class was defeated, and we must go very deeply into the reasons why. But when the workers in 1871 in Paris were defeated, Marx was astonished at their achievements. (He didn't think the absence of a vanguard had caused their defeat in Paris, as Big Flame seems to think it did in Chile — and maybe in Paris too.) He said they had 'stormed the heavens'. In the twentieth century the working class in the Third World and in the metropolis, but certainly in Chile has stormed the universe.

This reply was written when we were uncertain that Leoncio would be able to reply.

Race Today Collective



Dear Race Today,

It wasn't the African Liberation Solidarity Committee conference on the ideological direction that Black America should pursue that was so important; but that some of the participants namely Owusu Sadaukai should state openly that he had made many ideological mistakes in the past years, and that only revolutionary socialist principles should be the way forward for the black movement.

We have paid great attention and watched with fascination the rise of revolutionary potential for change in the black American nation over these past years.

The advent of Martin Luther King, civil rights crusades, the struggles in the South, the burning of the ghettos — the crude petty black nationalists, the rhetoric spouting opportunistic super-revolutionaries and the rise and fall of the Black Panthers have aptly shown this potential for change. Today, those who have maintained their convictions have stayed the course of protracted struggle. The band-waggoners have hopped off. We can now begin to seriously and objectively dissect and analyse our position vis-a-vis world revolution and to try and clarify our position. Abdul Alkalimat and Owusu Sadaukai are quite right when they state that basically our struggle is one of class.

For it is only when the downtrodden proletariat have effectively destroyed that 'boss class' and instituted a system of revolutionary socialism, that our nationalism can be assured. It is not that black workers are not aware of the lack of working class consciousness among white workers, as recently highlighted in your journal. Black proletarians are the vanguard of workers' struggle today by necessity because we are oppressed as a class and by race.

Stokely's contention that the black worker must not move unless the white worker is moving is crass and dangerous nonsense. It is through working class struggles that our consciousness is raised to higher levels of combat, and if the white worker is not moving we must move him, for our loss is greater.

The ideal that all black energies should be channelled towards the African conti-

...BACKLASH

nent is woolly and muddled thinking. We the black workers must support revolutionary socialism wherever it may be; be it the M.I.R. in Chile; New Beginning in Trinidad and Tobago or the P.A.I.G.C. in Guinea-Bissau. That we should liberate and unify Africa, and then emigrate back to the Motherland and live happy ever after is silly and reactionary rubbish that needs to be smashed.

Today the African in the diaspora is affected by imperialism wherever he is. That we are a part and parcel of this reality means that we must fight it scientifically.

Only by smashing this brutal exploitive system, by waging an all out struggle can we hope to have bread, peace and liberty. As Sadaukai inferred, we felt that capitalism, imperialism, Marx and Lenin are the 'white boy's' things. They ain't got anything to say to us. Today we know better, Amilcar Cabral knew, the people of Mozambique and Angola know. We are very much a part.

We must press on.

Rolston Calenda

Friends,

It was interesting to see your feature in the November *Race Today*, 'Which Way Black America'. I see the ideological debate which is currently taking place in the black movement in the USA as having important implications for struggles throughout the world. One only has to see how the black power movement in the US influenced the struggles of black people here in Britain and other parts of the world. It is unfortunate that the speeches are an edited version and therefore do not enable one to do full justice to the different speakers; nevertheless one can get the essence of them.

It is interesting that these personalities of the black movement in the US have adopted a class standpoint such as Imanu Baraka, who was in the forefront of the cultural nationalist movement, and Owusu Sadaukai of the Black nationalist tendency. What I think is important for us to look at is what in particular brought about that change in the ideological position of the black movement in the US, and what the outcome of that change may mean in terms of the struggles of black people in this country and other parts of the world where black people are waging a day-to-day struggle against capital. Sadaukai cites one reason for this when he says:

I see myself as a human being who is both a product of the environment that I live in, and hopefully a person who is contributing to changing the nature of that environment. And because of that dialectic it is always possible to have said something in 1972 that is no longer adequate to describe how I see the world in 1974.

The African people on the content of Africa are also contributing to changing that environment. The black movement in

the US identifies with the struggles of their brothers and sisters on that continent; in particular with the liberation struggles in the Portuguese colonies. The extent to which the African liberation struggles have influenced the change in these ideological positions can be seen from the presentation of the speakers; all of them quoted from Amilcar Cabral and referred to the African struggles. To say that this is the only factor that influenced the change in ideological positions would be incorrect, but that they have played an important part, together with the general fragmentation of the leadership of the black movement, is evident.

The black American movement has influenced the struggles of black people in this country by not only adding power to the struggles of black people, but also influencing the ideological position on the part of the leadership of that movement. This can be seen by the existence of the Panther movement in Leicester and London and the strong cultural nationalist tendency, both of which manifest themselves up and down the country. Of these groups that still exist and still identify with the black American movement in the late sixties and early seventies, I would ask, what does the ideological debate that is sweeping through the US herald in terms of their positions? Groups in Britain will have to deal with the logical outcome of the debates taking place, and in so doing take the struggle of the whole black movement here to a new level.

Today throughout the Caribbean the peoples are waging a struggle against the post-independence middle class who contemptuously call themselves 'our leaders'. The extent to which the black movement in the US gave power to the Caribbean struggles is seen in the explosion in 1970 by the Trinidadian people who threatened the foundations of the Williams' regime and by the mass struggles all over the Caribbean involving the youth and unemployed who are a high percentage of the population. That is to say, the degree to which the black movement in the US has influenced these struggles is to the extent that the Caribbean economy is entangled with American capital. Now the question is to what effect the Caribbean struggle will have on the black movement in the US. The Caribbean people have a confidence and determination parallel to that of black Americans, and as I have shown, they have an intimate connection.

The positions of Alkalimat, Sadaukai and Baraka all have a tendency of underplaying the sharp class divisions within the black community. Alkalimat states 'there is the contradiction between the white and black worker — the contradiction that the ruling class uses to keep the working class divided. . . . The class contradiction inside of the black community, the contradiction that keeps the black liberation from developing'. In pointing out these secondary contradictions in the

capitalist society, Alkalimat goes on and states that the struggles of blacks will merge with the white workers movement. In recognising the class contradiction inside the black community, and then to see the black community as a whole merging with the white working class, to me underplays the whole development of the black middle class in the US and how sharp the contradiction is between the black middle class and the mass of black people.

Baraka quite rightly points out 'that small groups of blacks who control some means of production, and have an exploitative relationship to wage labourers, do not have control of the total means of production that we [black people] make ultimate claim to'. But as this class is developing all the time, it is important to see the class contradictions within the black community as an integral part of the black struggle. Baraka, by saying that only a small group of blacks control some means of production, overlooks the fact that quite a large number of black people are a part of capitalist institutions that are set up for the specific purpose of controlling black people. For example, the whole black studies programme, black mayors, the existence of NAACP and CORE, all of which were borne out of the intense struggles by black people in the early sixties and which are now black middle class institutions. These institutions are part of the capitalist plan for the control and manipulation of black people.

The position of Stokely Carmichael can be seen for what it is: a total lack of understanding of the struggles of black people. The momentum of the class struggle has and will deal with Carmichael and others who propound such positions.

C. Hilliman

Next month's Backlash will be on 'The Tribals of India: A Nation in Change' and Black America. Responses should be in by Monday, 25 November.

Last month we published an article, 'Which Way Black America where leading theoreticians put forward their analyses on the struggles of Black people in America. All of them were preoccupied with the relationship of race and class. The following article, on the struggle of the coalminers in the South during the '30s, shows how the strength of black workers determined that relationship.

Once again in Harlan County, Kentucky, miners and their wives are fighting courageously against the coal companies as they did in the 1930s.

There is one major difference, however. In the '30s, black miners played a leading role in the Harlan County struggle, which was built largely on their militancy. Today, the strike at Brookside is all white — or was until one black man brought in to scab refused to do so and joined the strike. This contrast points up a problem that faces miners all over the country — one which the United Mine Workers (UMW) must soon come to grips with.

How the machines replaced men

The problem is obvious in the statistics of what has happened in the mining industry over the last 25 years. Machines have been taking the place of men. In 1948, there were 441,631 coal miners in the nation,

and they mined 560.5 million tons of coal. By 1970, there were only 140,149 miners, and they mined 602.9 million tons. And, although this elimination of human labour was hitting all miners, it was hitting black miners the worst. Thus, whereas in 1930 nearly one-fourth of all U.S. coal miners were black, today fewer than 8 percent are.

In Harlan County itself, in 1930, 1,722 miners out of a total of 11,624 were black — that is, 15 percent. In 1970, there were only 102 black coal miners in the entire county — 4.8 percent of the total. Although blacks had not necessarily been the last to be hired in the coal mining industry, they were certainly the first to be fired. This fact is a problem not only because it is unjust to blacks. It also represents a major blow to the strength of all coal miners in their struggle with the coal and oil trusts.

The early UMW: a model of interracial solidarity

For when we look at the history of mine workers' struggles in this country, we see that it was the strength and militancy of black miners that made possible every major advance of the workers in this industry.

The early history of the UMW of America is a model of interracial solidarity. In 1890, the National Progressive Union and the National Trades Assembly merged to form the UMW. The 1,000 black members of the National Trades Assembly became charter members of the new union. One of the UMW's black founders and pioneer organisers was Richard L. Davis, who served for many years as a member of his district executive board in Ohio. He was elected to the union's National Executive Board twice, in 1896 receiving the highest vote, and running second the follo-



Miners in Birmingham, Alabama protesting at the Southern Company's importation of coal from South Africa 1974 photo credit: Earl Dotter UMW

WHERE ARE THE BLACK WORKERS ?

wing year.

Blacks were in the lead

Davis fought successfully for the election of black miners as union officers at all levels. In many UMW locals, the only black member would be elected president or secretary. In 1899, a black miner from Iowa, O.H. Underwood, said: 'I believe that the United Mine Workers has done more to erase the word white from the Constitution than the Fourteenth Amendment.' By 1900, between 10 and 15 percent of U.S. coal miners were black. At that time, one-fourth of the UMW membership was black, a result of the union's forthright stand against racism. These 20,000 black UMW members represented two-thirds of all black union members in the country at that time!

In the 1920's, with John L. Lewis at the helm, the UMW began a downhill course. In 1922, Lewis sold out a unified strike of 100,000 miners, later signing a contract for less than the miners had been getting before the strike.

The 'save the union' group

Rank and file miners responded by organizing the 'Save the Union' faction, which ran John Brophy for president against Lewis in 1926. Today, many historians are convinced that Lewis stole the election from Brophy. One of the key charges against the Lewis leadership was racial discrimination. After failing to defeat Lewis, members of the 'Save the Union' faction left the UMW and formed a new, Communist union, the National Miners' Union (NMU), in 1928. Of the NMU's top three officials, one, vice-president William Boyce, was black. The NMU vigorously fought against racial discrimination, while Lewis' agents tried to break up NMU meetings by shouting racist epithets.

In February, 1931, a 10 percent wage cut sparked a strike of 10,000 miners in Harlan and surrounding counties in Kentucky. Between 350 and 400 black miners joined the strike.

The battle of events

At first it was a UMW strike. But on 4 May, armed deputies and miners fought one of the bloodiest battles of the Depression, the Battle of Evarts. The shootout resulted in the deaths of three deputies and one miner. When 34 miners were charged with murder, the UMW pulled out.

Four of those who faced murder charges were black: Henry Oliver, Ganzie Banks, Elzie Phillips, and Andrew Hench. They were tried by a racist judge who would not allow attorneys even to call black men 'mister' in his courtroom. Ultimately, seven of the defendants, including Elzie Phillips, were convicted and sentenced to life; some were later par-

doned.

After the UMW bowed out, the strikers sought support from the National Miners' Union. The NMU responded by sending in organisers and relief workers, and by building a defense for the miners facing criminal charges. One Communist organizer Harry Sims was murdered in cold blood by a deputy.

The fight against racism

The Communists not only fought against the racism of the companies, the courts, and the UMW; they fought against racial divisions of any sort within their own union. When some strikers argued that the strike kitchen should be segregated so that the coal operators would not use the Jim Crow laws as a pretext for a raid, the Communists argued back for six or seven hours; they finally convinced the workers that all should eat in the same kitchen.

The NMU finally lost, but not before it had led the most militant mining strike of the era, and had focused the nation's attention on the wretched condition of Harlan miners. This was quite an accomplishment at a time when miners across the country were facing starvation. During this same period (the late 20's and early 30's) the once-powerful UMW was losing two-thirds of its membership, a trend that was not to be reversed until the upsurge of the CIO later in the decade.

The coal operators could not have driven the black men from the mines over the last 25 years without the collaboration of the UMW leadership, first John L. Lewis, more recently Tony Boyle. These men collaborated with the coal operators to automate the mines, thus putting thousands of miners both black and white out of work. And there was no fight put by the union to protect the rights of black workers.

The tricks the companies used

Thus, the coal companies were able to use all kinds of tricks to eliminate blacks, even where they had high seniority. For example, if a new machine was being brought in, a white miner would be given a month's training in its operation in advance, if a black miner was in line for the job, he would then be told he was not 'qualified'.

Or in some mines, all of the black miners would gradually be assigned to one or two sections of the mine. Then the company would announce that it was closing these sections off — thus laying off all the blacks. Blacks were pushed out of any leadership role in the UMW nationally, as Lewis made the union into a racist dictatorship, subject to his personal whim.

Boyle's continuation of these policies continued the regime until he was ousted last fall by Miners for Democracy, a 52-year reign.

Two movements laid the groundwork for the overthrow of the old leadership — and both were black-led. One was the Black Lung Association, whose first president was Charles Brooks, and the other was Disabled Miners and Widows, headed by Robert Rayne. Both Brooks and Payne are black miners from West Virginia.

With this background, it is especially ironic that all of the national officials elected on the reform slate are white (Arnold Miller, Mike Trobovich, and Harry Patrick).

The challenge of today

Today Miller has made some small steps toward restoring to the UMW its historic tradition. In his public statements he has noted the importance of interracial solidarity. He has appointed Levi Daniel, a black miner from Beckley, West Virginia, as interim president of District 29 (Southern West Virginia), the UMW's largest district.

But this is only a small beginning, and if there is to be any real change, the thrust must come from all levels of the union, top to bottom. In contrast to the traditional top leadership, working white coal miners have proved many times in local elections that they don't vote on the basis of racial prejudice; they are more interested in getting leadership that will fight for their interests.

For example, in Pennsylvania, black miner William Finley ran for his district board and, although some of his running mates worried about his picture being on literature, he won by 2 to 1 in a 95 percent white district. In a number of predominantly white mines, blacks are now serving as elected chairmen of mine committees.

The stake of white workers

The National Petroleum Council has predicted a continuing rise in the demand for coal and estimates that 20,000 more miners will be needed in this decade.

White miners have a very real stake in seeing that a fair share of these jobs go to blacks, and that black miners again move into positions of leadership at every level in their union. This is what made the union able to fight the toughest industry in the country in its strongest days; this is the only thing that can put it in a position to do so again.

This article first appeared in the Southern Patriot, November 1973.

REVIEWS

The Lump: A Heretical Analysis
A Solidarity pamphlet
By Dave Lamb
April 1974. 15p.

In this pamphlet Dave Lamb lucidly destroys the arguments of the building employers, the trade union leaders, the Labour Party and the 'traditional left' against the Lump, and exposes the political motivation behind their opposition. His attempt has been to *understand* the Lump — why and how it arose, what it tells us about working class strength, audacity and ingenuity — rather than to justify it. Hence a heretical and undoc-trinaire analysis.

The starting point for this analysis is the principle, 'the emancipation of the working class must be the task of the working class itself'. The conflict over the Lump pivots on the question of *control*. The large building employers want a more organised labour force keyed to modern methods. Building work cannot be organised as rationally and efficiently as it could be to secure maximum profits when it is organised on an *ad hoc* ever changing unpredictable contract basis with individual workers or small groups of workers.

Trade unions provide the best ready-made organisations through which to achieve this control. They attempt to restrain workers' freedom to organise their own time and to exploit the 'free market' to the full for the sale of their labour. They hope to deflect workers' motivation to satisfy their self-interest into social contracts and the like. The fact that the labour movement and the left also share the employers' opposition (albeit for different reasons) makes the employers task easier. However, as is explained in *The Lump*, the workers have the employers and the Government foxed into trying to find legislation which won't have embarrassing repercussions.

For their part the trade unions and the left regard the Lump as an obstacle to advancing their spheres of influence. Almost half a million workers refuse to let a full-time official represent them, and do a less than satisfactory deal over their heads. Indeed, the considerably better bargain these workers have obtained made the unions redundant at the time and presented an illusive force to the bewildered left.

Several important observations emerge in this analysis: namely the revolutionary implications of the Lump's style of organisation — the principle of the 30 hour, 35 to 40 hour week is being attacked. Nor are the consciences troubled by the national interest, inflating the diminishing tax revenue, 'shoddy' work — all headaches for the government and the employers, *not* them.

The left protests that such wide wage differentials and different work conditions divide the working class, undermine attempts at effective militant action and endanger the rights of workers

THE LUMP on heretical analysis

by dave lamb
a solidarity
pamphlet
15p

within unions — a position which plays into the hands of the trade union leaders, who in turn play into the hands of the government. Hardly revolutionary. To quote the pamphlet: 'The real cohesiveness of the working class is not smashed by different ways of selling one's labour.' The slogan 'defend workers' rights — smash the Lump' mystifies the exploitative nature of *all* wage labour.

For this same reason neither can the Lump be glorified as a workers' paradise. There are wide variations in the contracts arranged and many abuses, but these are intrinsic to capital, not the Lump. As for workers' rights, the trade unions have lost their credibility to defend these. Lump workers are always accused of being scabs, but it is instead the trade union representatives who are the biggest scabs when they proudly negotiate rates at half the going price! Nor is there any proof that workers, organised as limited companies or self employed, cannot take militant action on behalf of the class. It is worth studying the challenge to the government by men, women and children in the self-employed truckers' strike in the USA last winter during the oil crisis. They brought the country to a standstill when they challenged the government's energy and prices policy. Women were able to grasp the opportunity not merely to support their husbands but to organise their own campaign against prices as part of the whole attack.

David Lamb only traces the growth of the Lump from the late '30s, but fails to mention that it originated in the 1880s with the immigrant Irish workers, ever scornful of English laws and regulations who still form a large part of the Lump. The recent struggles of Asian workers, as reported in *Race Today*, also show how, in attacking capital, immigrant workers need to defy the norms and practices of the trade unions in order to find their strength and for their demands to be heard and met.

In recent months there has been a growing hostile campaign against Agency

nurses, clerical workers and transport drivers who have exploited the high demand and shortage of their labour power to score some marginal and temporary victories over sectors of the ruling class. This campaign affects women workers in particular — the sector with the least time and the least money on account of their unwaged work in the home. Even in times when no spectacular wages can be sighted, women seek work through agencies and notice boards in order to organise the working day for themselves. The extra flexibility and occasionally slightly higher wages still leaves them far behind the more enviable position of the Lump workers. Indeed why the silence at the same time over catering and cleaning bureaux, used largely by women and immigrant workers to find notoriously low paid employment?

It is significant that the left and the trade unions should be condemning workers only when they are doing better than usual, while the low paid employees are largely ignored. What trade unions will fight now to meet the specific needs of women and acquire for them an extra portion of capitalist spoils? In this period when we are being straight-jacketed into a social contract, workers will have to defy or circumvent trade unions' restrictions, as the Scottish workers have already shown. All the recent strikes there were unofficial.

The Lump pamphlet gives a concrete example of the autonomy of the working class struggle, and unmasks how the rigid 'revolutionary' strategies of the left serve only to put reins on these struggles.

Solveig Francis

Bauxite Strike and Old Politics
Eusi Kwayana
ASCRIA. Georgetown. 65p.

After reading this booklet I have come to the conclusion that during the Demba strike when the workers revolted against both union and party bureaucracy the revolutionary left in Guyana was in a mess. They were divided in their commitments to the unity of Black nationalism and their support of workers' demands.

The underlying reason for the vacillating in the ASCRIA camp lay in the contradictions that emerged in Black Nationalist politics in the Caribbean whenever the working class is in revolt. If new politics did emerge it was not with the help of ASCRIA and elders, to whom it seemed that loyalty to race and party and leader took precedence over any objectives the workers may have for themselves.

What comes out of this quagmire is a type of reasoning well known to workers in Britain. It is your right to fight for your class interest, but when that struggle threatens to break the power of the (in this case the black bourgeoisie) State, that's enough; you stop there or we will stop you by *any means necessary*. There

will be no revolution from the bottom, any change in your interest will remain our prerogative.

As the Deputy Prime Minister of Guyana, Mr. Reid, said quite casually: 'If your children are gassed, it's because of you. If you are brutalised by the police, it's because of you. Once you are IDLE all sorts of things will happen to you. One thing is certain, the government will maintain law and order. It's disgusting as far as I am concerned to see these things happen.'

Kwayana's comment was that Mr. Reid had viewed the *complex* industrial situation with a peasant's logic and a doctrine of obedience. Ironically, this man is the deputy leader of a so-called revolutionary party (PNC, a 'workers' party'). In his introduction he said that this party was introducing a new dimension and trying desperately to distinguish itself from the other political parties in the Caribbean. A few pages before he actually gave the reasons why this peasant's logic is the root and branch of the PNC. He reports that the opinion of the leading member of the PNC was 'when the workers strike, even before the act of nationalisation who does it hurt'? It hurts the Guyanese, it hurts the government. When Demba's profit falls, so does the revenue of the government. So when our COMRADE LEADER talks of being idle is he concerned with workers' interests or government revenue? This is a curious form of peasant's logic.

Kwayana proceeds to say that the nationalisation of Demba is a fraud because the nationalisation didn't really consider the re-organisation of production to include worker participation and decision taking on how the industry was going to be run. I agree. He clearly testifies to the corruption and incompetence of the union executive (which incidentally is representative of the PNC party at Linden). But when the workers revolted the ASCRIA camp also accused them of sabotaging the national interest, being anti-nationalisation and they were being impervious to Alcan pro-imperialist propaganda. (Never mind the fact that it was these workers and their comrades in the sugar industry that first demanded that their industries should be nationalised in order to break the grip of the expatriate imperialist overlords on the Guyanese economy.)

To digress and cover some ground that Kwayana touches in his introduction. He accuses the Peoples Progressive Party (Dr. Jagan) of being merely a Stalinist and bureaucratic party, Jagan had failed to break any new ground in Guyana's politics. I agree that the PPP is bankrupt but so also is the PNC. On a historical note the split in the PPP post-1953 has many strands which reach out into every spectrum of Guyana's political life. The toppling of the PPP government represented a major defeat for the working class of Guyana (remember that it was over a Bill to legalise the power of workers' unions that the government was turned out of office by the Conservative Party of the UK). The then bourgeoisie vacillated (which included Eusi Kwayana, Burnham and Jagan) at a time when the

masses were demanding effective leadership to deal with British imperialism.

The split not only defeated the class but it turned the class onto itself and the ensuing internecine war paralleled the splits that existed in all colonial countries by imperialism. The interests of the industrial worker seems opposed to that of agricultural worker, where the industrial worker of the city benefits from trade union organisation and the agricultural workers suffer from the lack of it. (Trinidad and Ghana are two examples of this phenomenon.) In Guyana a unique situation presented itself. Not only were they divided by industrial and agricultural work but this difference was exacerbated on racial lines: African industrial workers and Indian agricultural workers. The bourgeoisie took the opportunity of using racial differences as a means to build their new political base.

Why else would the PNC under Burnham seek an alliance with the United Democratic Party under John Carter? (Incidentally the UDP is the same party that the British government found too patriotic and loyal to impose as an interim government in 1953-7. How can a working class party form an alliance with such 'rats'? Birds of a feather flock together.)

To come back to the body of the book, the old politics were challenged but the workers and their new ideas were defeated because their 'friends' surrendered them to the state machine when the pressure was on, as they had done in 1953 against the British government. In *After Gaff* (the last chapter) the author says: 'The bourgeoisie often arise from among the political elite and have an investors' attitude to public resources. Their attitude is that they have done so much for the people that everything they take from the public resources is an insufficient reward for their work of salvation. In some places, just as investors look for continual dividends from their investments some members of the political elite demand unending tribute for their services. No doubt they employ funds from public resources to ensure against loss of public office.' They therefore show that they are stuck amidst the rocks of insecurity. They may be managing capital — but they have none of their own.

Finally, there are two points to be made about this book.

1. The author gives the accurate information but comes to the wrong conclusions. Do I detect a glimmer of the leadership complex that says, 'we are the few who are able to see what your problems are going to be but at no time can workers be right in their judgement of a situation; being workers, such intellectual problems of nationalisation and bankrupt leaders are beyond their grasp, unless some revolutionary thinker points them in the right direction. I am not saying that these are Mr. Kwayana's views. But Mr. Kwayana does imply that how the bourgeoisie operates in a neo-colonial situation (as stated in his *After Gaff*) could not be seen by the workers of Demba before some revolutionary leader like Mr. Kwayana himself pointed them out. How else could he conclude that the workers had been led by

imperialists agents against the nationalist government? *Why could he not conclude that the workers are capable of seeing exactly the pro-imperialist stance of the PNC and rose to meet it?* Why could he not conclude that the workers were issuing notice to the powers that will run the new state industry (Gaubaux)? We will not be made sacrificial lambs to your new propaganda exercise. The exploitation of man does not disappear with nationalisation. We have no intention of having you exploit us to prove to the imperialist powers that you can control us workers more efficiently than they ever did.

2. The booklet provides good reading. It is riddled with contradictions and shows clearly the confusion of which the radical black nationalist camp in the Caribbean are prone to.

Padawole

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman
Directed by John Kortey
Distributed by ABC

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman, starring Cicely Tyson, is yet another black movie in the recent spate of black films. This film opens up in the deep South in 1962 when the black community is fighting to end segregation. The black community calls on Jane Pitman — then 110-years old — to drink from a fountain which until then was only used by whites. She refuses. The film then shows how the autobiography was obtained. A white liberal journalist from the North comes to the South to interview her at the height of the civil rights campaign. He is horrified at conditions in the South and asks her about life under slavery.

She begins her story. It is the end of the civil war where she is a slave of ten. She has to nurse her mistress's baby and fetches and carries water. She meets up with a group of Yankee soldiers and a 'kind' one tells her that women in the North abandon their slave names, and so she abandons hers and calls herself Jane. He tells her that if anyone ever beats her again she should 'come straight on to Ohio' to see him.

The civil war ends and the master of the plantation reads out the proclamation abolishing slavery with tears in his eyes while the mistress weeps. The slaves listen in complete silence with bowed heads, looking dejected. The freed slaves decide to leave the plantation — and they are seen shuffling with bowed heads past the mistress who kisses the children and women and the master who shakes their hands. They take potatoes and apples from barrels, which they put into a sack, and leave the plantation. On the way North they are attacked and brutally murdered by white patrolmen. Only Jane and Ned, a young boy of four, escape.

The two keep heading for the North. On the way they meet up with two people, a woman who has lost all her slaves, family and wealth, and blames it all on the 'niggers', but gives the two water to drink because she is a 'God-fearing woman', and a freed black man in a buggy who gives them a lift. (But when a white man confronts

him he plays the Sambo role of grinning and answering, 'Yes sah, no sah', and makes the children get off and walk. They go out to board a riverboat to cross the river but the captain orders the black boat-hand to drive them away because they have no passage. They turn back, unable to get to the North. Miss Jane takes a job on a plantation, cutting sugar cane and working in the fields. The owner pays them once a year. Ned grows up and begins to hold classes for the freed slaves, teaching them to read and write but has to flee when the vigilantes burn down the school and beat up Miss Jane. Later on he returns but is labelled as an agitator because he speaks out against segregation — and exhorts the slaves to rebel. He is murdered by whites.

Miss Jane marries and leaves the plantation but is forced to return when her husband dies. She lives on the plantation, working in the fields, doing housework and taking in washing until she is too old; then she goes back to nursing white children.

The film comes back to 1962 and Jim, the son of Miss Jane's friend, is killed in prison after he has gone to desegregate a drinking fountain in the centre of town. His death incites Miss Jane to go and drink from that fountain. The owner of the plantation warns her and the rest of the workers that if they get involved in the struggle he will put them off his land. But they still accompany Miss Jane to the fountain where the police watch, powerless, and the white crowd stares with hostility as she hobbles up the path to the fountain and drinks.

The film is a white liberal view of slavery and not a film about slaves from the point of view of slaves or about the struggle of slaves which ended slavery. In fact, it does not go into depth about anything. It's a nice moving story. The view that one is given is still that of the mass of 'poor oppressed' negroes with no place to go and with only one or two courageous leaders. It succeeds in moving the audience so that when Miss Jane drinks from the fountain the black audience claps and cheers at the sense of achievement — a victory after a long hard road.

The mood of the film is very much of a particular era — the civil rights era. When hundreds of whites came South to help in the desegregation drives — and came into contact with 'negroes' for the first time.

Cicely Tyson acts the role of Miss Jane Pitman beautifully. But it will attract a different audience from the Shaft-Superfly bag because it is the type of film the family would watch on a Sunday afternoon.

Lorine Burt

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Roy A K Heath is from Guyana and is at present a schoolmaster in a London Comprehensive School.

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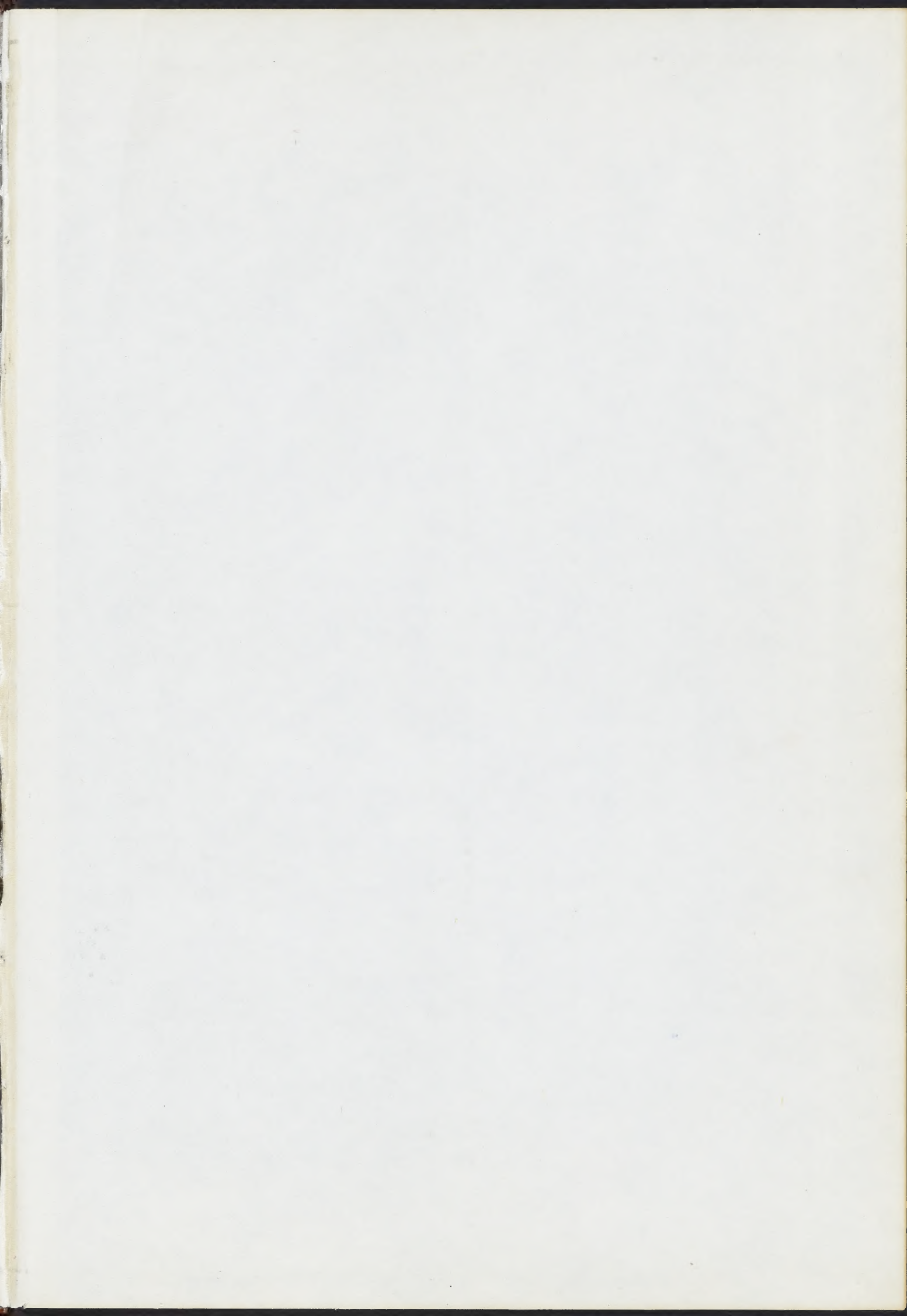
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